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THE Wrestler

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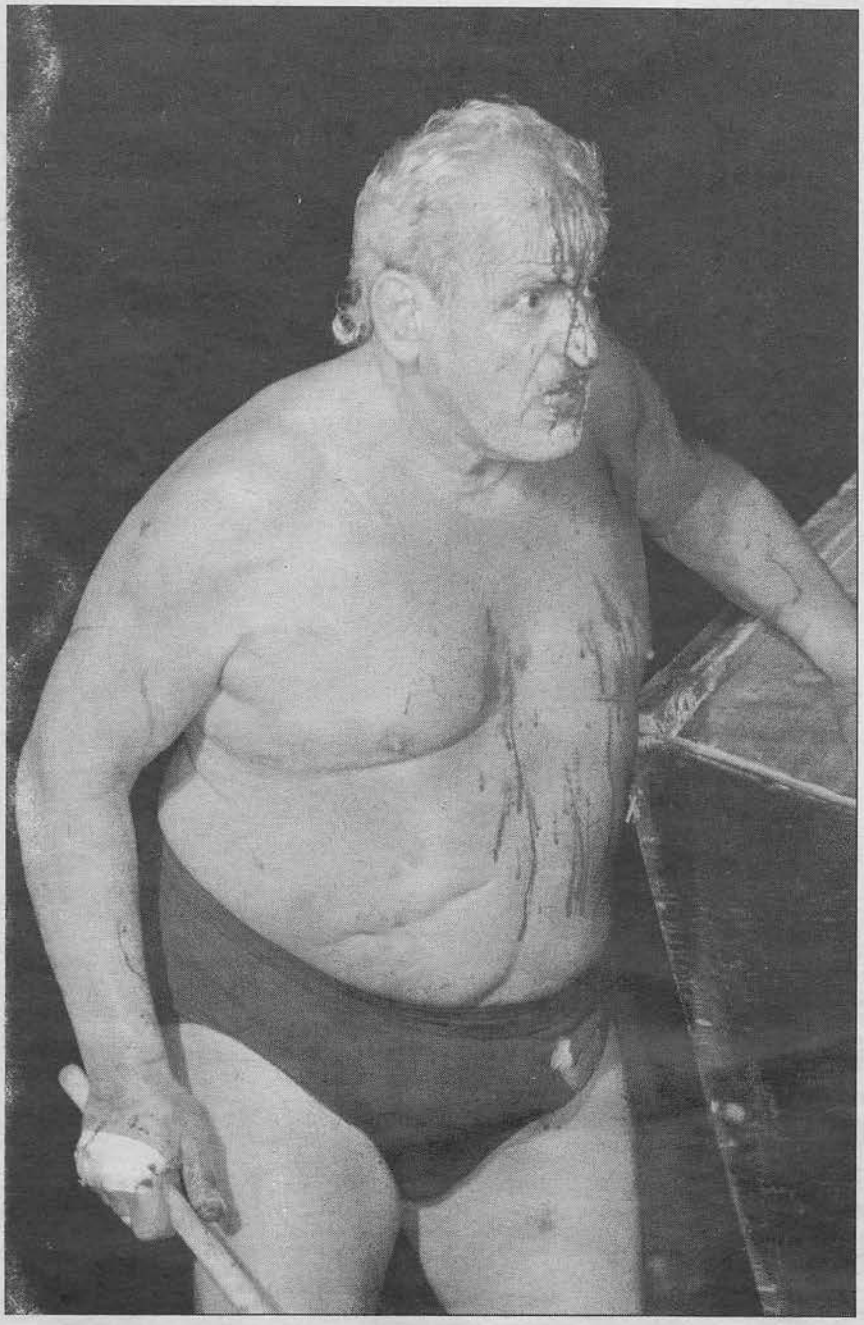
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YOUR LETTERS

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The **Sheik's propensity for violence and attack on Terry Funk angers reader Robert Coffey, who is no fan of Funk's. He would like to see Sheik banned for life.**

SHEIK SHRIEK

Your recent coverage of the match between Terry Funk and The Sheik ("Terry Funk vs. The Sheik: 'That Crazy Old Man Set Me On Fire!'," October 1994) proves that Sheik is still wrestling's most dangerous and depraved superstar.

True, I have never been a Funk fan and will admit the Texan has been as underhanded as can be. However, that in no way excuses Sheik for his vile actions. He should be banned for life.

ROBERT COFFEY
South Gate, CA

GOT A CRUSH

I feel Crush is an awesome wrestler, but doesn't know how to use his magnificent strength properly. He depends on the same moves too much, and should be using more scientific moves.

I also believe a small part of him misses his fans. I think a lot of tension is building up in that guy, and he will see the light. When he does, I hope he will take the skills he learned in his time as a rule-breaker and use them to crush the competition.

QUINNANNE HENNY
Mount Joy, PA

CREDIT VINCE

I'm tired of hearing people bash Vince McMahon and the WWF. People talk about how much of a circus the WWF is, yet fail to realize that McMahon was the one who made wrestling famous. Wrestling used to be a humdrum

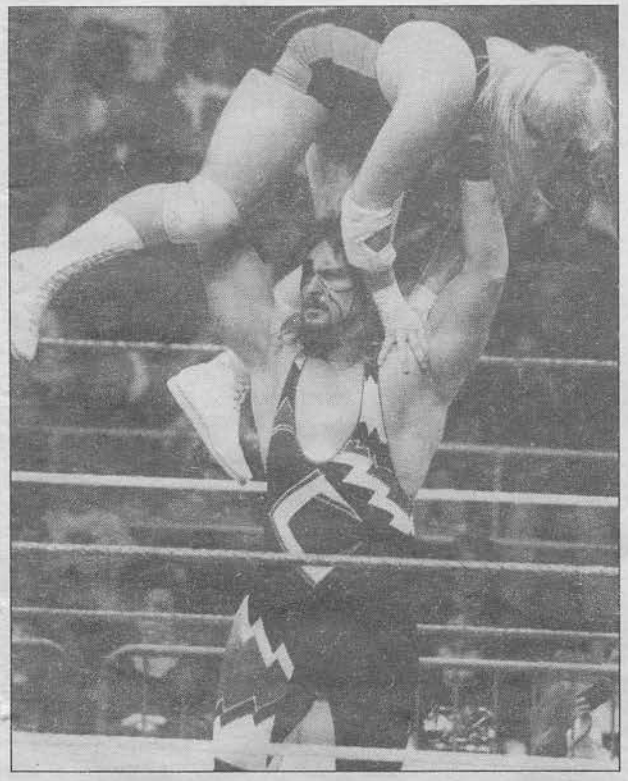
sport where only a few hundred people came to watch the matches. When the WWF opened in the 1960s, few thought it would be any different.

Yet as the federation slowly developed under McMahon's guidance, wrestling attendance increased. WWF stars could not only wrestle, but had personality, a trait other wrestlers lacked. McMahon also introduced the world to pay-per-views with the Wrestling Classic.

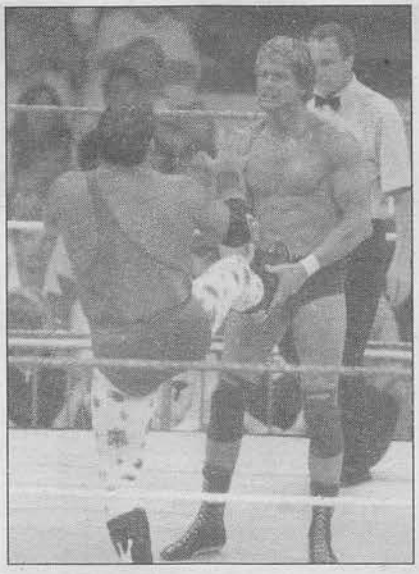
But the WWF didn't stop there. Its top stars often traveled to foreign countries, exciting France, Japan, and Australia with great wrestling action.

Look, I'm not ignoring great wrestlers like Lou Thesz, Ric Flair, or Dusty Rhodes. I just think that the WWF deserves much more credit than the readers of this magazine give it.

NICHOLAS ACCETTA-EVANS
Brooklyn, NY



Does Crush miss fan support? Reader Quinnanne Henny believes so, and says the skills Crush has learned as a rulebreaker could be put to better use once he returns to fan favoritism.



Jerry Lawler's wrestling—not his gift for insults—makes reader George Garrett laugh. He thinks it's funny to see the Memphis monarch embarrass himself against Roddy Piper and others.

A ROYAL PAIN

Sure, I laughed at the collection of Jerry Lawler's one-liners ("'He's So Ugly ...', The Jerry Lawler Book Of Insults," November 1994). However, this WWF fan gets more laughs from his wrestling! To watch this buffoon continually humiliate himself in the ring against Roddy Piper and Duke "The Dumpster" Droese is unintentionally funny. Don't worry, Jerry. It's not too late to hit the stand-up circuit.

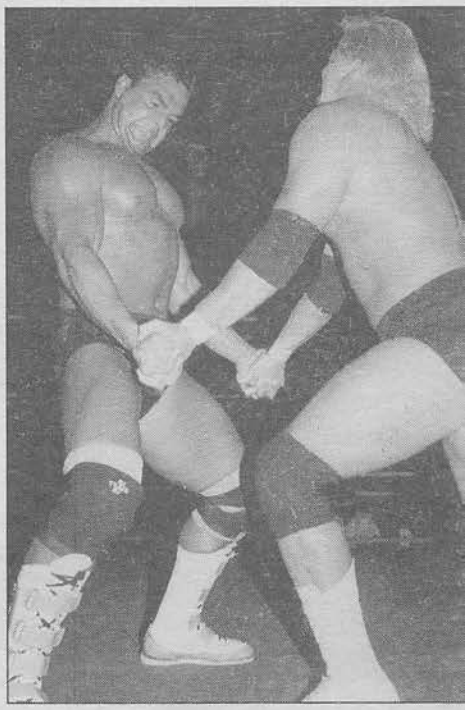
GEORGE GARRETT
Salt Lake City

TEXAS TIME

Is wrestling coming back in the Lone Star State? ("Great Action In Global! The Heart Of Texas Wrestling Is Still Beating—With A Vengeance!," November 1994) You better believe it! There are plenty of good wrestlers here in the Southwest, ready to assume the mantle of greatness established by the Von Erichs and Freebirds. Scott Putski, John Hawk, and Moadib are three who come to mind. It's simply a matter of giving them a place to compete locally so they don't have to leave, like the Funks or Ted DiBiase did.

Things are truly heating up in Global, especially since promoters here in the Dallas area are planning to refurbish the venerable Sportatorium. Once that's done, I expect wrestlers (and fans) will be flocking there in droves. Watch out, world—Texas wrestling is back!

HANK DESMOND
Farmers Branch, TX



Scott Putski (left) is one wrestler who is leading the resurgence of Texas wrestling, says Hank Desmond. He expects the Global Wrestling Federation to attract more fans in the future.

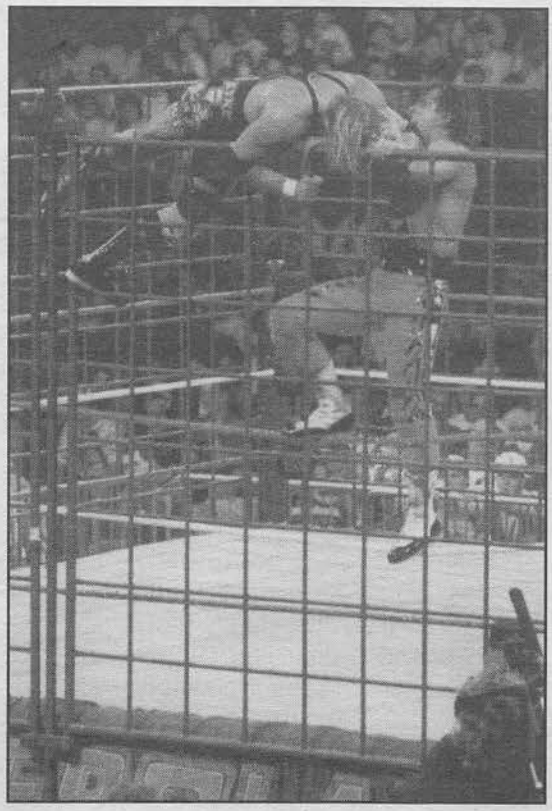
CACTUS CORNER

I'm glad to see Cactus Jack take his act on the road, whether WCW likes it or not. Maybe his wrestling is too intense for some of the suits in the federation, and if it is, that's their loss.

(Continued on page 66)

WHAT'S HAPPENING

By Bill Apter



The brotherly battle continued at the new United Center in Chicago, as Bret Hart retained his WWF World title by beating younger sibling Owen in a cage match. Owen gained some revenge by pounding Bret in the cage after the match!

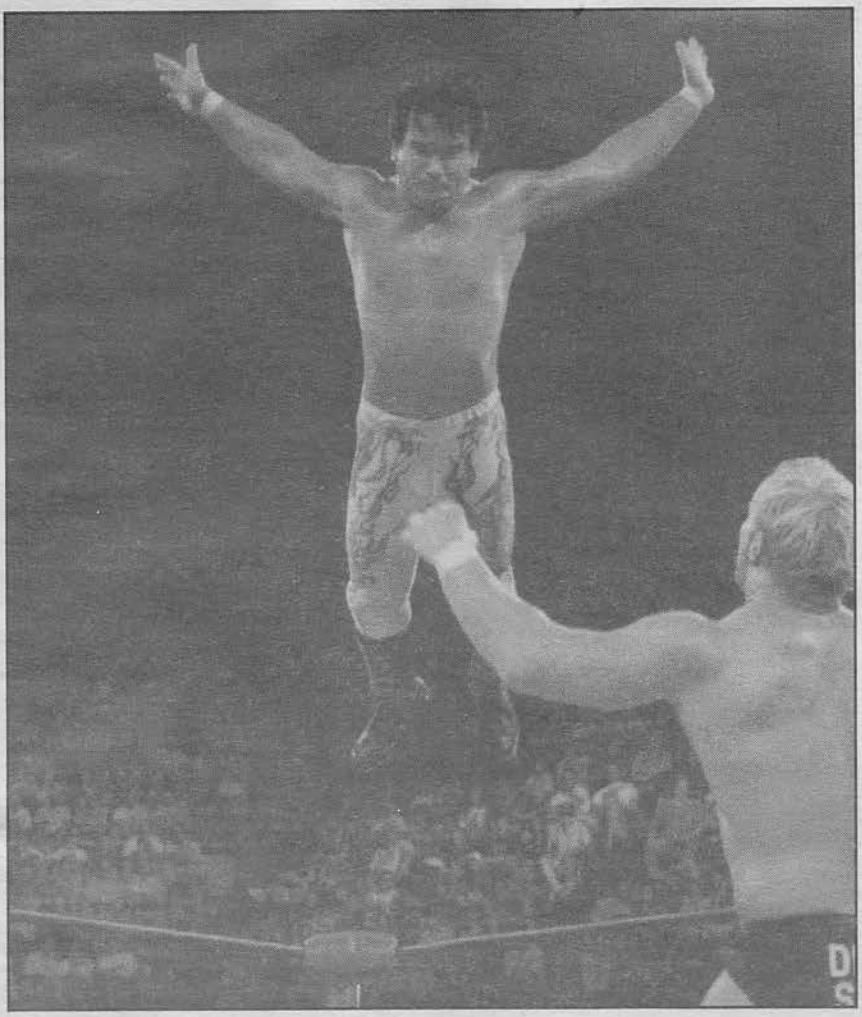
FOR 24 HOURS, **Diesel** held a unique spot in WWF history. The seven-footer held two championships simultaneously, as he added the World tag team title (with **Shawn Michaels**) to the Intercontinental belt he already owned. Diesel and Michaels surprised **The Headshrinkers** on August 28 in Indianapolis for the tag belts.

But Diesel's dual title status didn't last long. The next night at SummerSlam '94, the first event held at Chicago's United Center, he lost the I-C belt to **Razor Ramon**, the man from whom he had won it in April. Worse, he and Michaels appeared to have a falling-out.

It happened when Michaels was preparing to superkick Ramon, who was being held by Diesel. Instead, Shawn accidentally hit Diesel, and Ramon rallied to post the pin. Michaels fled the ring area as soon as the match ended.

Paul Bearer's Undertaker proved he was the genuine article, as he easily disposed of **Ted DiBiase's Undertaker**. Shed no tears for the "Million-Dollar Man," though. It was revealed that he has had **Tatanka** on his payroll for some time! Tatanka pinned **Lex Luger**, whom DiBiase was supposedly trying to woo.

Bull Nakano truly brings out the best in **Alundra Blayze**. The WWF World Women's champion has had some superb matches with Nakano, and their SummerSlam bout was perhaps the best one on the pay-per-view. There was plenty of back-and-forth action with Nakano dominating for



Steve Austin may label himself a "Dragon Slayer," but he became the one who was burned! Rick "The Dragon" Steamboat used his vast technical knowledge to pin the WCW U.S. champion and win the belt at Clash of the Champions XXVII.

Hulk Hogan took a hurtin' in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, but was able to keep his WCW World title at Clash of the Champions XXVII. The "Hulkster" took a hit on the knee from a mysterious masked man while coming out for an interview early on the card. Hogan was hospitalized but managed to return in time for his match against **Ric Flair**. The "Nature Boy" won by countout.

The injury was at first thought serious, but Hogan still was scheduled to participate in WCW's September tour of Europe. Flair and **Sherri Martel** were indefinitely suspended for matches within the United States by Commissioner **Nick Bockwinkel** for their role in the attack.

One title that did change hands in Cedar Rapids was the U.S. belt, as veteran **Rick Steamboat** surprised **Steve Austin**. "I respect Steve, but he can be beaten, and I proved it," said Steamboat, who compared Austin to a young Flair in the December 1994 issue of THE WRESTLER. "You can't get cocky in wrestling—I've known that for years. He'll definitely learn from this."

(Continued on page 76)

a while, but Blayze took control and gained the pin with a German suplex. She's definitely now the world's top woman wrestler. As far as I'm concerned, she should have been ranked in the "*PWI* 500," despite what Publisher **Stu Saks** says!

Bret Hart and **Owen Hart** took their sibling rivalry inside a steel cage, with Bret winning and retaining his World title. After the match, Owen and renegade brother-in-law **Jim Neidhart** dragged Bret back into the cage, locked it, and began to pummel him. Other members of the Hart family tried to enter the cage to no avail until **Davey Boy Smith**, who's married to **Diana Hart**, came to the rescue. Talk about dysfunctional families!

STEVE ANDERSON'S VIEW



NO HOLDS BARRED

with David Rosenbaum

A CONDEMNATION OF Ric Flair in the "Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down" section of this magazine brings up the subject of "conduct unbecoming a former champion." It's an interesting concept, and it makes Flair an easy target for a potshot, but I wonder if there's really such a thing.

Conduct unbecoming a former champion? Instead of figuring out what exactly that is, here's what we've been led to believe conduct becoming a champion is all about.

Hulk Hogan, in his prime, defending the WWF World title once every other week.

Yokozuna, big enough to take care of himself, relying on Jim Cornette to run interference for him and keep Lex Luger as far away as possible.

Jerry Lawler throwing fire.

Big Van Vader unnecessarily power-bombing Cactus Jack on a cement floor. Conduct unbecoming a human being, much less a champion.



What's conduct unbecoming a former champion, as in the recent case of Ric Flair? Would the same conduct be tolerated if the wrestler in question held a title belt?

Sabu wrestling everywhere but inside the ring.

Ric Flair, in his heyday, constantly relying on interference by The Four Horsemen.

If Flair is now guilty of conduct unbecoming a former champion, he certainly isn't guilty of conduct unbecoming a champion. Perhaps the rules change when you lose the belt. Dignity? It's basically non-existent in pro wrestling. This is not a sport for the dignified. And forget about knowing how to lose with style. There's no such thing. In wrestling, apparently, it's win at any cost.

(Continued on page 70)

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BLINDSIDED

BY ANDY RODRIGUEZ

BULL NAKANO IS the best thing that could have happened to Alundra Blayze's career. Blayze probably would read that and agree, knowing she has the bruises to prove it. She'd have every right to complain, but I think she would admit Nakano has made her a much better wrestler, and a better champion.

Though she received her basic training in the sport in the U.S., Blayze's skills were honed in the intense atmosphere of Japanese women's wrestling. Learning from—and competing against—the best female wrestlers in the world made Blayze a truly outstanding competitor.

"To be my best, I knew I had to go to Japan," she said in a interview several years ago when she was still known as Madusa Miceli. "It's like boot camp—they don't fool around. One wrong move and I would've been out of there. The experience was hellish, but it definitely was worth it."

Blayze has received serious challenges since becoming WWF World Women's champion last December, but had not been tested to the fullest of her abilities until Nakano decided to compete in the federation.

Nakano is a stocky powerhouse with a demeanor and appearance that makes her adviser, Luna Vachon, almost look normal. Nakano is an amazing athlete. In her home country she is a legend. Blayze knew plenty about her before they started locking up in the U.S., as she beat her two out of three times on the WWF's Far East tour in May.

The Japanese star has at times made Blayze look outclassed, which makes Blayze look that much more impressive when she counters Nakano's offense.

Thanks to Blayze and Nakano, the women's belt in the WWF now is a much more valuable prize than it has been in years. In fact, until Blayze came on the scene, the title had been dormant for several years.



Bull Nakano

That must please Blayze, who is very much a fighting champion. She was hurt when she was accused of selling out to the WWF. It turns out the only thing she changed was her name. Her reputation remains intact.

Title or not, Blayze now must be considered among the top five women wrestlers in the world. Her efforts against Nakano should leave no doubt. She has probably never felt so physically punished, but the rewards have never been greater.

Said one friend, "Alundra is at the top of her game right now. She isn't cocky or arrogant, but she feels good about it, and that's coming through in the way she wrestles."

Clearly, her place in professional wrestling is as a wrestler, not as a valet or a "Director Of Covert Operations," her dubious duty with The Dangerous Alliance in WCW. She could be a great manager—she has managed credibly before—but now is a time for her to be in the ring.

Greater challenges lie ahead. Several great Japanese wrestlers are eager to follow Nakano to America. Blayze knows some of them may pose more of a threat than Nakano. But it is because of Nakano that she is ready for them.

It may also be argued that Blayze is the best thing to have happened to Nakano's career. Her challenge to Blayze has made her an international star, and it has made her a better wrestler, too, though she would probably argue Blayze couldn't make her better than she was already.

Nevertheless, for Blayze the Nakano rivalry is a good deal. Whether Nakano wants to admit it, it's a good deal for her as well. For the rest of us, it's a great deal. □

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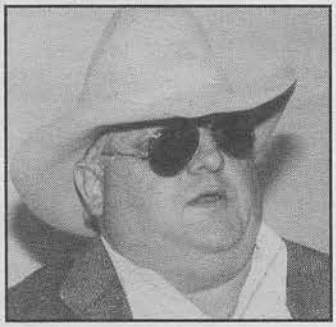
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Thumbs Up

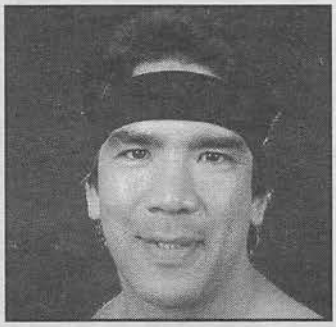
Each Issue, *The Wrestler* will praise the noteworthy and damn those who violate the honor of wrestling. The praiseworthy receive a Thumbs Up, the disgraceful are marked with a Thumbs Down. Here is this month's roll of honor and shame.



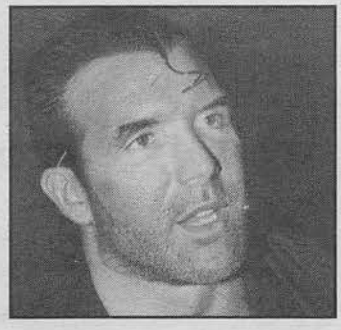
Thumbs Up to Alundra Blayze. The former Madusa Miceli has brought respect back to women's wrestling. It's saying something when two women have the best match at a major pay-per-view event, but Blayze vs. Bull Nakano made SummerSlam '94 worth watching. And Alundra, the WWF World Women's champion, came through again by showing off her outstanding athletic and scientific ability under Nakano's vicious onslaught. Blayze finished her off with a superb German suplex that would have made Fritz Von Erich and Otto Wanz smile. Science and beauty together in one wrestling ring? That's a great combination.



Thumbs Up to Dusty Rhodes. While we'd prefer the "American Dream" stay on the sidelines to avoid the American Nightmare of permanent injury, we still enjoyed his comeback at Clash of the Champions XXVII. Dusty and son Dustin teamed against Bunkhouse Buck and Terry Funk in a wild match. Dusty's bionic elbowsmashes were as sharp as ever, even if the delivery man looks chunky around the midsection. Dusty even sent a chair smashing down on the head of Meng. Dusty and Dustin will pair for a few months, or at least until Funk and Buck realize they're up against too big an obstacle in two determined Rhodes.

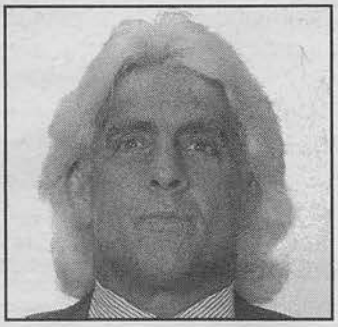


Thumbs Up to Rick Steamboat. The seemingly ageless "Dragon" won the WCW U.S. belt by beating Steve Austin. The cocky Austin waived the disqualification rule, thus enabling Steamboat to win the belt on a mere DQ. He accepted the stipulation, but didn't take advantage of it. At one point, Austin tossed his foe over the top rope, but Steamboat held the ropes and flung himself back inside. Austin was stunned, then pinned. "I wanted to do this the right way," Steamboat said. "I appreciate what Austin did, but a DQ is no way for a belt to change hands." Steve, take note. That's the mark of a *real* champion!

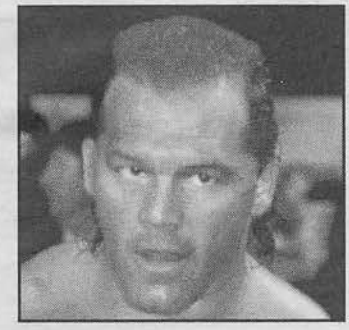


Thumbs Up to Razor Ramon. When the "Bad Guy" won his first Intercontinental title, most experts said, "It's about time." Few of them were surprised when he lost it. Now Ramon is a two-time I-C champ after beating Diesel, and nobody can call him an underachiever. Twice is no fluke. What's great about Ramon is that he overcame several early obstacles and considerable self-doubt, made himself a better wrestler, found himself, and became a star. He then briefly fizzled, but came back. At times it's entirely proper for experts to count out a wrestler. At other times, as in Ramon's case, it makes them look stupid.

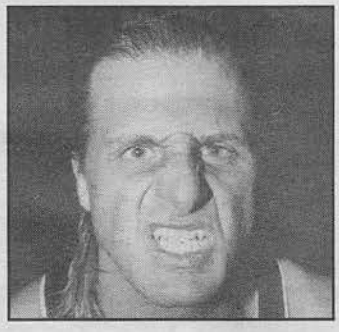
Thumbs Down



Thumbs Down to Ric Flair. As a 10-time former world champion, he should have some respect for the belt and treat his successor with dignity. We don't expect Flair to like Hulk Hogan being WCW World champion, but doesn't he realize that by attacking Hogan, he's not only injuring the "Hulkster," but his own reputation as well? Flair and Sherri Martel deserved each day of the indefinite suspension they received from WCW Commissioner Nick Bockwinkel, although Flair should not have been allowed to wrestle Hogan in Europe. At the least, the European matches should have been switched to non-title bouts.



Thumbs Down to Tatanka. While very little shocks us anymore, we were stunned and dismayed by Tatanka's turn to rulebreaker at SummerSlam '94. For several years, the Native American has represented all that is right with wrestling, using hard work, determination, and athletic ability to reach the top of his chosen profession. Everyone could be proud of Tatanka—until now. He backstabbed Lex Luger, making us believe Luger was the turncoat, and joined Ted DiBiase's entourage. But Tatanka should have kept his eyes open. Judging by the fake Undertaker's performance, DiBiase doesn't have a golden touch.



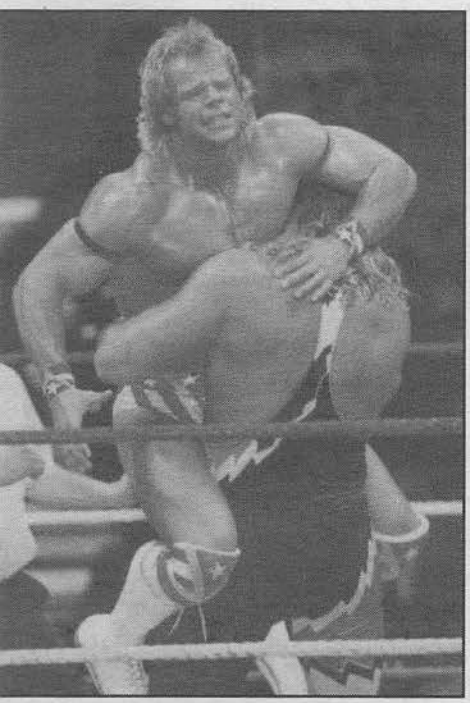
Thumbs Down to Owen Hart. Are you finished now, Owen? Have you had your butt whipped enough times by big brother Bret? Isn't it time to stop this stupid feud? You're making yourself look like an incompetent idiot. Before this whole thing started, it was easy to argue that you were a better wrestler than Bret. Not anymore. Bret's the better wrestler, and a better man. So what else is there to prove, Owen? That you're a bad loser? We already know that. That your "sharpshooter" can't match Bret's? We know that, too. You'll never be a world champion, Owen, but we figured that one out long before SummerSlam.



Thumbs Down to Shane Douglas. Why did "The Franchise" take part in the NWA title tournament in Philadelphia if he didn't care about winning the title? But Douglas *did* care. Otherwise he wouldn't have cheated to beat Tasmaniac, or dress as a Doink to get 911 disqualified in his semifinal match. Yet his strangest act came after beating 2 Cold Scorpio for the championship, when he threw the belt down and called the NWA "a federation that died—RIP—seven years ago." Very strange, indeed! Maybe Douglas should consult a psychologist. We have no explanation for his behavior.

CORRESPONDENTS REPORTS

Oakland, CA *(Correspondent—Chris Filbert):* The hatred between Lex Luger and Crush had been intensifying all summer. That's probably why they both agreed that the best way to settle their feud would be in a stretcher match, where the only way to win is to beat your opponent so badly that he needs to be carried away from the ring on a stretcher.



Lex Luger is in obvious pain as Crush puts him in a powerful bearhug. While Luger's strength was temporarily sapped, he rallied and conquered Crush in a stretcher match.

The action began as soon as the bell rang; Luger went right at his Hawaiian rival. Within a few minutes, he got Crush on the stretcher. Just before the ring attendants reached the doors of the dressing room, Crush rolled off the stretcher and made his way back to the ring.

The match was allowed to continue!

Crush took over at that point. He used a series of clotheslines and a bearhug to overpower Luger and sap his strength. Soon, he was able to get the American patriot on the stretcher, but Luger wouldn't stay there. Four times Crush tried, but Luger got up every time. Finally, Lex turned the match in his favor and smashed Crush with his steel-plated forearm. He rolled Crush onto the stretcher, but this time the rulebreaker wasn't getting up. Luger was declared the winner.

In other bouts: The Kid pinned Pierre ... WWF World tag team champions The Headshrinkers defeated The Heavenly Bodies ... Jerry Lawler beat Duke "The Dumpster" Droese by disqualification ... Adam Bomb pinned Kwang the Ninja ... Razor Ramon defeated then-Intercontinental champion Diesel by disqualification ... WWF World champion Bret Hart pinned Owen Hart.

Louisville, KY *(Correspondent—Michael Ewing):* A lot was at stake when the USWA held a 10-man tag team elimination match at Louisville Gardens. The winner was to receive a shot at heavyweight champion Sid Vicious later on the card.

After several competitors were eliminated early, only Tommy Rich, Jeff Gaylord, Spike Huber, and Brian Christopher remained. Christopher didn't last long as he was disqualified for hitting Rich in the groin. But Gaylord quickly took out Rich by pinning him. At that point, Huber did something very strange. Because he is a close ally of Vicious, he propelled himself over the top rope, giving Gaylord the victory.

Gaylord wasn't so fortunate when he faced Vicious. After about five minutes, Vicious powerbombed Gaylord and pinned him.

In other bouts: Doug Basham beat Leon Downs ... Danny Davis defeated Sean Casey ... Jeff Gaylord and Spellbinder wrestled to a time-limit draw ... PG-13 beat The Eliminators ... Tommy Rich, Doug Gilbert, & Spike Huber defeated The Moondogs & Brian Christopher.

(Continued on page 72)

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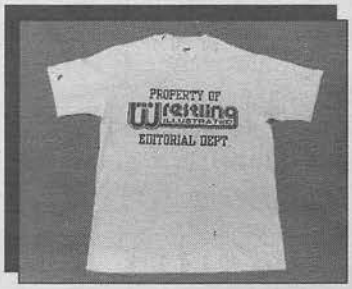
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Which of the following wrestlers did Lex Luger *not* defeat to capture one of his four U.S. heavyweight titles?
1) Nikita Koloff
2) Dusty Rhodes
3) Michael Hayes
4) Stan Hansen

True or False: Dusty Rhodes was once managed by rulebreaking manager Gary Hart.
1) True
2) False

How did Ric Flair severely injure his back in October 1975?
1) Airplane crash
2) Ring injury
3) Automobile accident
4) None of the above

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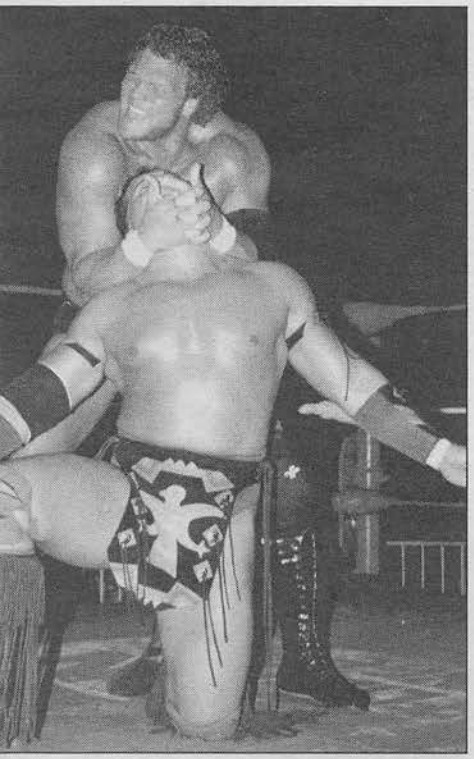
YOU ASKED US

Here's the monthly feature that YOU get to write! It's your chance to have a top wrestler answer YOUR questions! Only the best questions will be answered, so put on your thinking caps and come up with some good ones! Address your questions—and who you would like to have answer them—to:

YOU ASKED US, c/o THE WRESTLER,
Box 956, Ft. Washington, PA 19034.

Q: "My question is for WCW World champion Hulk Hogan: Are you going to make some more of those great *Thunder In Paradise* programs, or are you going to stay with wrestling full-time?"—Susan Senkel, Duncanville, TX

A: "Susan, I think it's a great show, too," Hogan replied. "Good news on both fronts. *Thunder In Paradise* is planning additional episodes, and I intend to wrestle a lot in WCW to please my millions of 'Hulkamaniacs' and defend this great belt. True, I'm still hurtin' a bit after what happened in Cedar Rapids, but I plan to keep going like that pink bunny on the battery commercials!"



USWA champion Sid Vicious is proud of his title. He says he'll win other titles in time, and adds one of them could be in the WWF if anyone on its roster (like Tatanka) has the courage to face him.

***

Q: "I have a question for USWA champion Sid Vicious: Are you thinking about returning to the WWF and going after the World championship? You are a great wrestler and have a good chance to win the title!"—Brian Yursha, Belle Mead, NJ

A: "Yes, I am a great wrestler," Vicious said. "Right now, I'm the USWA champion and damn proud of it! Down the road, I'll capture all sorts of other championships, you can count on that. Will one of them be in the WWF? I don't know. It depends on whether anyone on its roster of wrestlers has the courage to take on an overwhelming force like me, someone who cannot—and will not—be stopped!"

***

Q: "My question is for 'Nature Boy' Ric Flair: I've heard professional wrestling is the sport of giants. Does a person about 5'5" or 5'6" have a good shot at a successful ring career?"—Gene Catudal, Norton, MA

A: "Definitely!" Flair answered. "I attend many Charlotte Hornets games, and I'm amazed at how Tyrone Bogues, who's only 5'3", has had a fine pro career. Spud Webb, who's not much taller, has also done well in the NBA, and height is certainly more important in basketball than it is in wrestling. In fact, being too tall can work against some wrestlers because of their high center of gravity. The keys are drive, dedication, and determination. It isn't easy, Gene, but it can be done."



According to Fabulous Moolah, shown in control of Judy Grable, she had no favorite tag team partner during her long reign as champion. She says her strength was as a singles wrestler.

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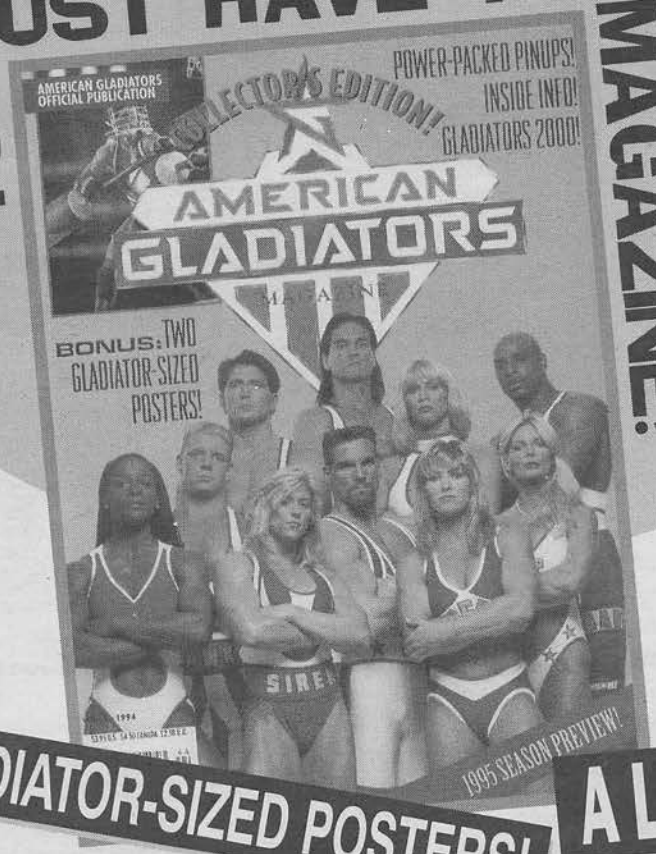
Q: "My question is for the all-time great Fabulous Moolah: All the years you were wrestling and were champion, which other woman wrestler was your favorite tag team partner?"—Marc Pecoraro, Fair Lawn, NJ

(Continued on page 74)

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INTRODUCING JESSE HENNIG

By Dave Lenker



Photos by Mark A. Peterson

Jesse Hennig is flanked by the two men he will invariably be compared to—older brother Curt, and father Larry Hennig. Jesse hopes he can build a career comparable to that of "Mr. Perfect" or "The Ax."

IS IT A blessing or a curse to be part of a famous wrestling family?

That's the question Jesse Hennig often asked himself when he was in high school in Minneapolis. Would it be better for him to try to make it as a wrestler on his own or draw on the experience of his father, Larry "The Ax" Hennig, and his brother, Curt?

"It was really good and bad when I was growing up," the 22-year-old recalled. "I lettered in football and wrestling for three straight years in high school, but all I kept hearing was that I would never be as good as my dad or Curt."

If he doesn't, it won't be for lack of effort on his part. Since turning pro three months ago, the 6'2", 210-pound Jesse has already gotten the opportunity to wrestle in Windy City Wrestling in Chicago and Pro Wrestling America in his native state. And he has done quite well.

He doesn't wear fancy tights in the ring, doesn't have special theme music that he makes sure is playing when he rushes out of the dressing room, and doesn't even favor any particular finishing move. For now, he is working on mastering the basics.

Who better to learn the basics from than two tested veterans like Curt and Larry Hennig, along with Brad Rheingans, who has spent a lot of time training Jesse?

"My father and I have been teaching Jesse about the sport for years," said Curt, "but Brad Rheingans is the best professional trainer you'll find anywhere and you can see his influence on Jesse already. He's so technically sound. I'd say he's at about the same level that I was at when I was his age."

Curt must have a lot of faith in

Imagine trying to follow a father who was a four-time AWA World tag team champion, or a brother known as "Mr. Perfect." That's the challenge facing Jesse Hennig, but he's ready to meet it

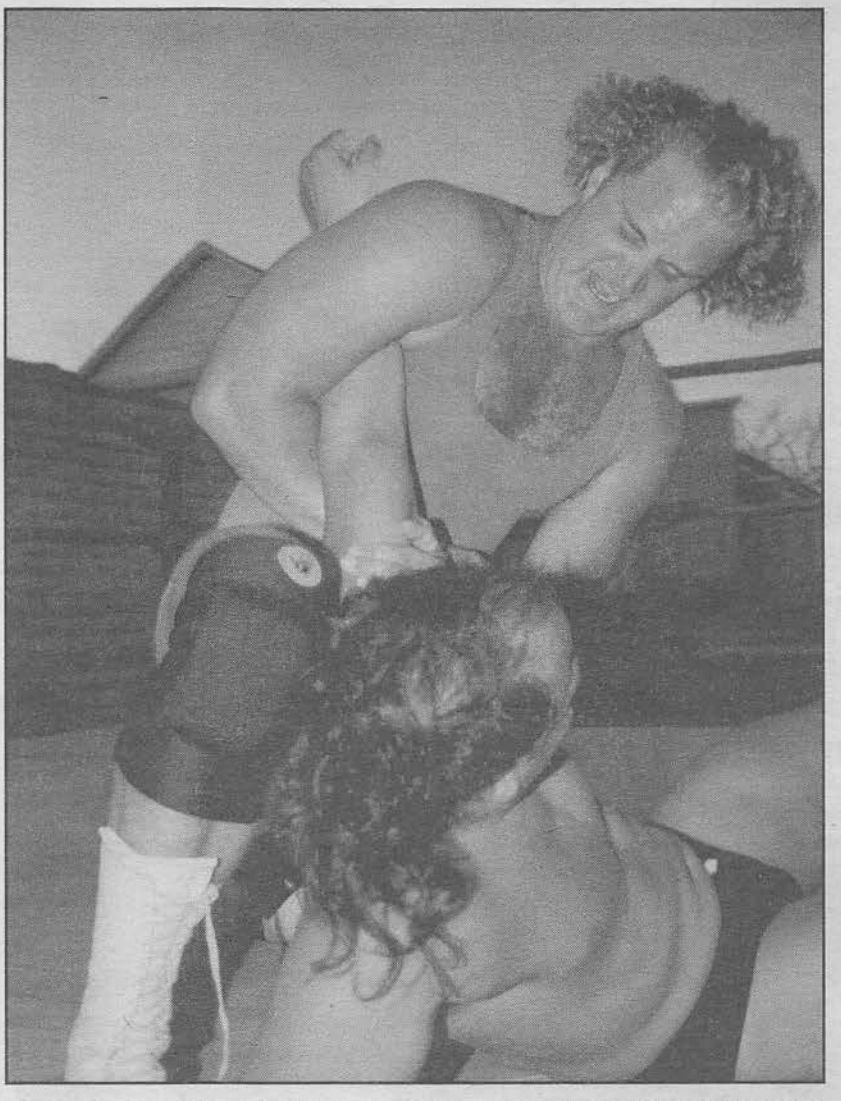
his brother if he is willing to stand at ringside for some of his matches. He is, after all, a man who settles for nothing less than perfection when *he* is in the ring. But Curt also knows what it's like to struggle. He didn't become the superstar that he is by accident.

Long before he became "Mr. Perfect," Curt was, well, pretty average. His first stint in the WWF in the early-1980s was uneventful, but he kept working hard, kept putting in those extra hours at the gym, and kept studying tapes of wrestlers he admired.

It paid off in a big way as Curt won the AWA World title in 1987 and held it for more than a year, and later captured the Intercontinental title twice.

Little brother hopes to take a similar route.

"I'm my own man, but in a lot of ways, I am like my brother," Jesse said. "Our styles are really similar. I don't think you can get very far in the sport if you're not a great technical wrestler. As far as I'm concerned, Curt is the best technical wrestler in the world today. He's even trying to get me to use his 'Perfectplex' as a finishing move. He gets on me sometimes, though. He says I don't execute it 'perfectly' yet. Give me time."



Jesse is beginning to make his presence felt in Upper Midwest independent federations. He shows the results of his training in a match against T.J. Lightning.

Jesse originally considered using his father's favorite finisher, the "ax," a punishing elbow-drop, but Larry talked him out of that in a hurry.

"It's not like he didn't know how to execute the move," the elder Hennig explained. "But it's a lot more effective if you're a bigger man—somewhere in the neighborhood of 300 pounds—and can put all your weight into it. Jesse's better off taking advantages of his strengths. He's real quick and real agile. At 210 pounds, he's not going to overpower too many people."

But Jesse knows that. He also has a good idea of how much hard work still lies ahead of him if he is to become the next superstar in the Hennig family.

For now, his plans are to continue wrestling in Midwest independents as frequently as possible and to keep on training. An extended trip to Japan somewhere down the road is a distinct possibility.

"Many people have suggested that to me," Jesse said. "Japan's a place where there are so many great technical wrestlers. It'd be a great place to learn.

"My ultimate dream is to become the third Hennig to win some kind of world title. Most of my dad's big matches happened before I was born, but I got to see a lot of Curt's great victories."

And if he does achieve that goal, maybe he can earn a nickname of his own.

"Right now I'm just Jesse Hennig," he joked. "Curt earned the name 'Mr. Perfect.' It's my job to earn one of my own." □

Q&A

Each month, *THE WRESTLER* will present a "Question and Answer" forum with an important figure in the wrestling world. It is your chance to meet wrestling's biggest stars as they answer the questions uppermost in fans' minds



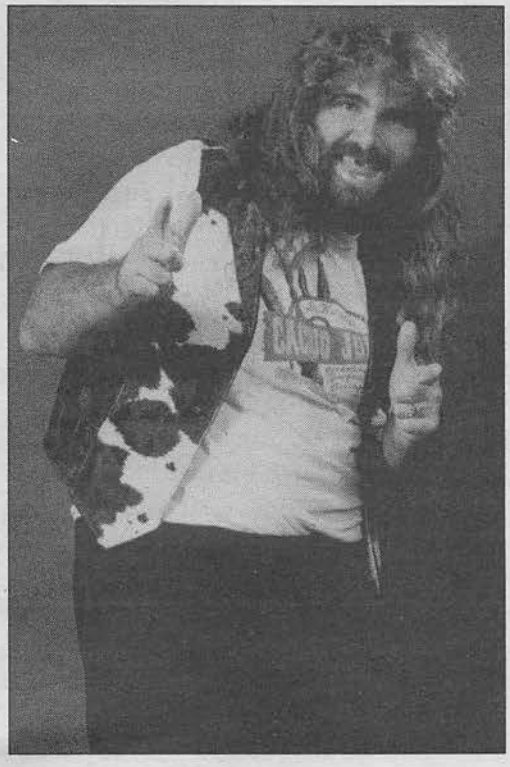
Q: How well do you think you fit into ECW's roster?

A: As well as anyone can, man! This is my kind of wrestling—take no prisoners, go 111 percent. Wrestling as family entertainment, like some people are trying to institute? Should I dress myself up in a purple dinosaur suit and attend kiddie parties? *(Sings)* I love you, you love me ... Naw, maybe I should go as a Power Ranger! Bang, bang!

Q: I wouldn't shout that here in 30th Street Station. Don't you think it's strange enough when people stare at your half-ear?

Terry Funk readies Jack for a left hand to the head. Jack and Funk were briefly rivals in ECW, but eventually joined forces to battle Public Enemy. He will probably be wrestling in ECW and other independents more frequently now that he has been banished from WCW.

CACTUS JACK



SOME COMBINATIONS SEEM just right for each other. Cactus Jack and ECW is a marriage made in wrestling heaven. ECW (once "Eastern," but now "Extreme," Championship Wrestling) is renowned—or notorious—for its anarchic action. Anything can happen on an ECW card, and often does. Its frantic fans wouldn't have things any other way.

Into the federation comes Cactus Jack, 1½ ears and all. He has the devil-may-care temperament just made for ECW. He'll do anything to win, and if that includes being bloodied, being rendered unconscious, or even losing a body part, so what?

It's a far cry from WCW, where Jack has plied his trade for several years. There, he's been a square peg in a federation of round holes. While the fans adore his intensity, his style embarrasses WCW officials. They soon signed him to a loser-leaves-WCW match against Kevin Sullivan, perhaps hoping his former tag team partner could get him out of WCW for good.

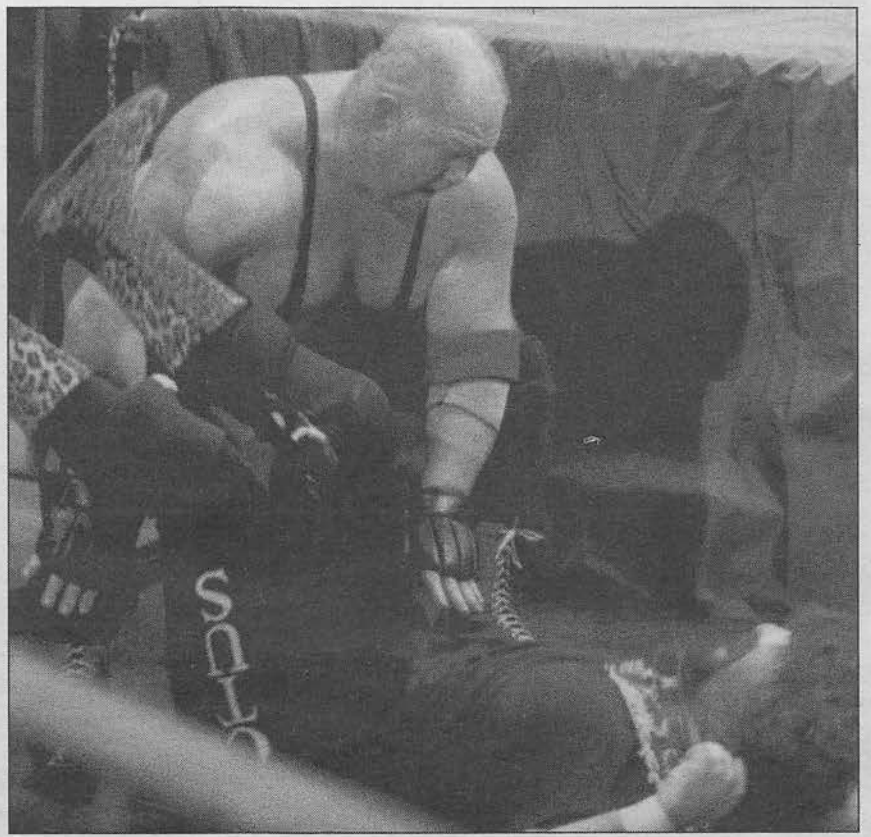
Editorial Assistant Ed Emelett spoke with Jack as he arrived at 30th Street Station in Philadelphia from his home in New Mexico. "Jack's different, no doubt about it," Emelett reported. "That's why the fans love him."

A: ***(Smiles)*** **Let 'em stare. It's a badge of honor, presented by Mr. Vader! Maybe down the road I'll get it fixed, but not right now. It's one less thing an opponent can pull on.**

Q: Was it tough adjusting to living with half an ear?

A: ***(Cups hand to half-ear)*** **Could you say that again? Seriously, I was lucky enough that it didn't affect my hearing. For a while, my sense of balance was altered, and that's bad news for any wrestler. But eventually I regained my bearings, and I got back in the groove. Now I'm wrestling as well as I ever have. I'm not afraid of flying—heck, I'm not afraid of anything!—but it's better for me if I take the train. That's the reason I took Amtrak from Albuquerque.**

Q: You and Mikey Whipwreck are



If Jack leaves WCW, he says he would miss facing longtime nemesis Big Van Vader. Jack says Vader challenged him in every match with his endless methods of torture.

currently ECW tag team champions. Isn't he an unusual partner?

A: I salute Mikey because he keeps on keepin' on! I saw all the abuse he took during those months he was TV champion. That took a lot of guts, and plenty of courage! Take it from someone who knows something about being abused. Mikey's getting better and better as a wrestler, and I'm proud to help him develop in any way I can. He's one of the best tag partners I've ever had, no offense to Maxx Payne. Take *that,* Kevin!

Q: If you do leave WCW, will you be glad to finally be rid of Big Van Vader?

A: This may sound weird, but I would miss Vader more than anyone else in WCW if I left.

Q: What?

A: I'm not kidding! I loved putting myself up against him, no matter what he threw against me. When I wrestled Vader, I was tested to the ultimate. Anything I face from here on in will be a walk in the park compared to what Vader gave me. Who else could torture me like that for all those months? Thank you, big guy!

Q: Are you sorry you didn't really get a chance to wrestle Terry Funk at ECW Arena because of Public Enemy's interference?

A: Not as sorry as they're gonna be! I looked forward to that match. So did Terry. I've respected that guy for years for all the punishment he's taken and given out. And to have those buffoons from the 'hood—guys who *think* they're tough—spoil the night not just for me and Terry, but all those great ECW fans who I know anticipated Cactus vs. Funk as much as Terry or I did ... well, it gets my blood boiling. And I'd love to shed some of it against Rocco Rock and Johnny Grunge!

Q: How do you feel about some people referring to your tag team match with Maxx Payne against The Nasty Boys at Spring Stampede as a possible Match of the Year?

A: It was wild, and I loved every second of it! I only wish we won those tag team belts that day instead of at Slamboree, because Maxx deserved wearing a title belt far more than that creep Kevin ever did.

Q: What set off the conflict with WCW officials?

A: They don't realize that wrestling is violent by nature! It *dies* without violence. Here's a bit of what I mean. Back home in New Mexico, we have mountain lions and other big cats roaming all the mountain ranges. If some scientists came in and declawed one of them for research, that poor cat wouldn't last two days in the wild. Why be foolish and deny fans the violence of wrestling? Embrace it! It goes with the territory. Sanitized wrestling satisfies nobody. Not the wrestlers, not the fans, not any promoter worth his salt.

Q: But don't you worry about spectators getting hurt, like what happened in ECW several weeks back when all those chairs were thrown in the ring?

A: Listen, I don't want to see fans hurt. They pay their hard-earned money that keeps us all afloat, and they haven't been trained to handle this sort of stuff any more than I'm trained to perform open-heart surgery! But if you're sitting in the front row in one of my matches



Jack calls Sabu "a singleminded maniac, pure and simple," and says that's what he would be like if he were an aerial wrestler. He's hoping he'll have the chance to face Sabu several more times in ECW.

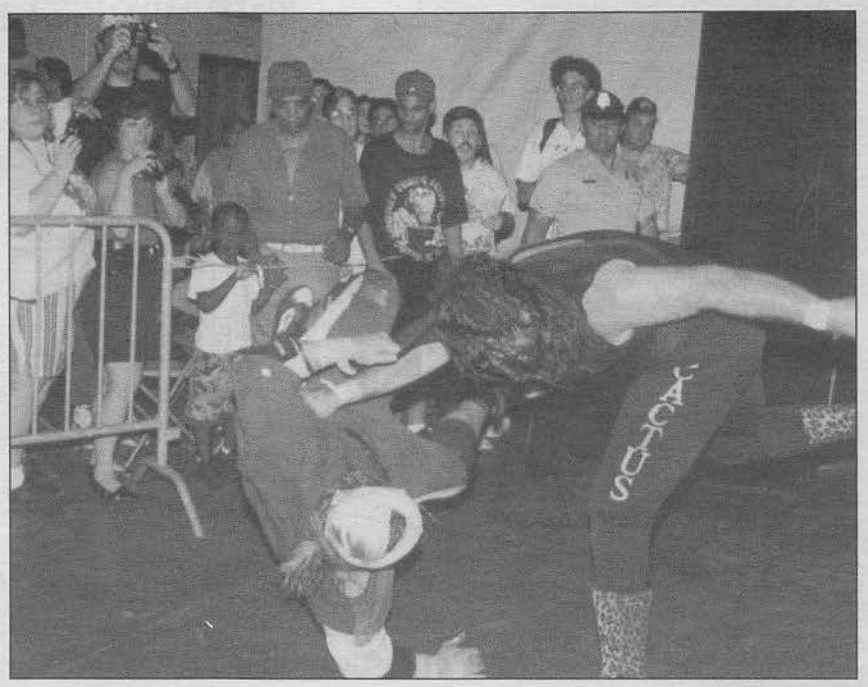
and action spills out of the ring, you should have enough common sense to get out of the way, pronto. And I have never been known for using common sense! *(Laughs)* Listen, fans, I'm not going to avoid using the railing just to protect you!

Q: How'd you like facing Sabu?

A: ***(Smiles)* If I were an aerial wrestler, that's who I'd be! The guy never lets up, never lets go. He's a singleminded maniac, pure and simple. In short, the kind of wrestler I like! I'd love to face him some more and beat him. He likes taking abuse. I like taking it, too, but I enjoy giving it out a little more.**

Q: You weren't scheduled to participate in the NWA tournament at ECW Arena because you had tag team commitments that night. One, could you have won the tourney, and two, had you become champion, would you have thrown down the NWA belt like Shane Douglas did?

A: I would've had a great chance to win the tourney! There were some fine wrestlers in the field, including Shane and 2 Cold Scorpio that used to be in WCW. Those are guys I respect, but could they have stopped me? No way. Neither of them have that manic ... genius, for lack of a better word, though it sounds so egotistical. And I don't know if I would have done what Douglas did. But he did it, so that's that. ECW's now in the extreme, and take it from me—that's the *only* way to wrestle!



Jack tosses Public Enemy's Johnny Grunge onto the floor. He remains angry at Grunge and Rocco Rock for interfering in his match against Terry Funk, denying him a chance to test his skills against someone he respects.

Q: Why do WCW executives seemingly want you out of the federation, especially after 93 percent of WCW fans voted *not* to have you banned?

A: You know, there's a line in a song somewhere that says, "Don't criticize what you can't understand." And those suits just don't understand me. They're so removed from what's really going on in the sport. Some old lady who's never seen a wrestling card in her life probably called up CNN Center, complained about one of my matches, and the word got through to the head honchos. But that poll showed how the fans feel about me, and I appreciate their affection! I feel the same way about folks who come to WCW cards. But listen, WCW, as much as I respect Hulk Hogan and what he's done for wrestling, the world doesn't revolve around the "Hulkster." A lot of people will miss me if I have to leave WCW.

Q: How do you want fans to remember you once your wrestling career is through?

A: Someone who was incredibly intense for every match, asked no quarter and gave none. Sure, I'd like to win some more titles, but I want it to be said that when you watch Cactus Jack wrestle, you *probably* will see him win. You *definitely* will see him give it every ounce of everything he's got every time he's in the ring! And to fans, that's far more important than any won-loss record. They don't expect a guy to win every time, but they do want to see him give all he's got. And I do that, every second of every match! □

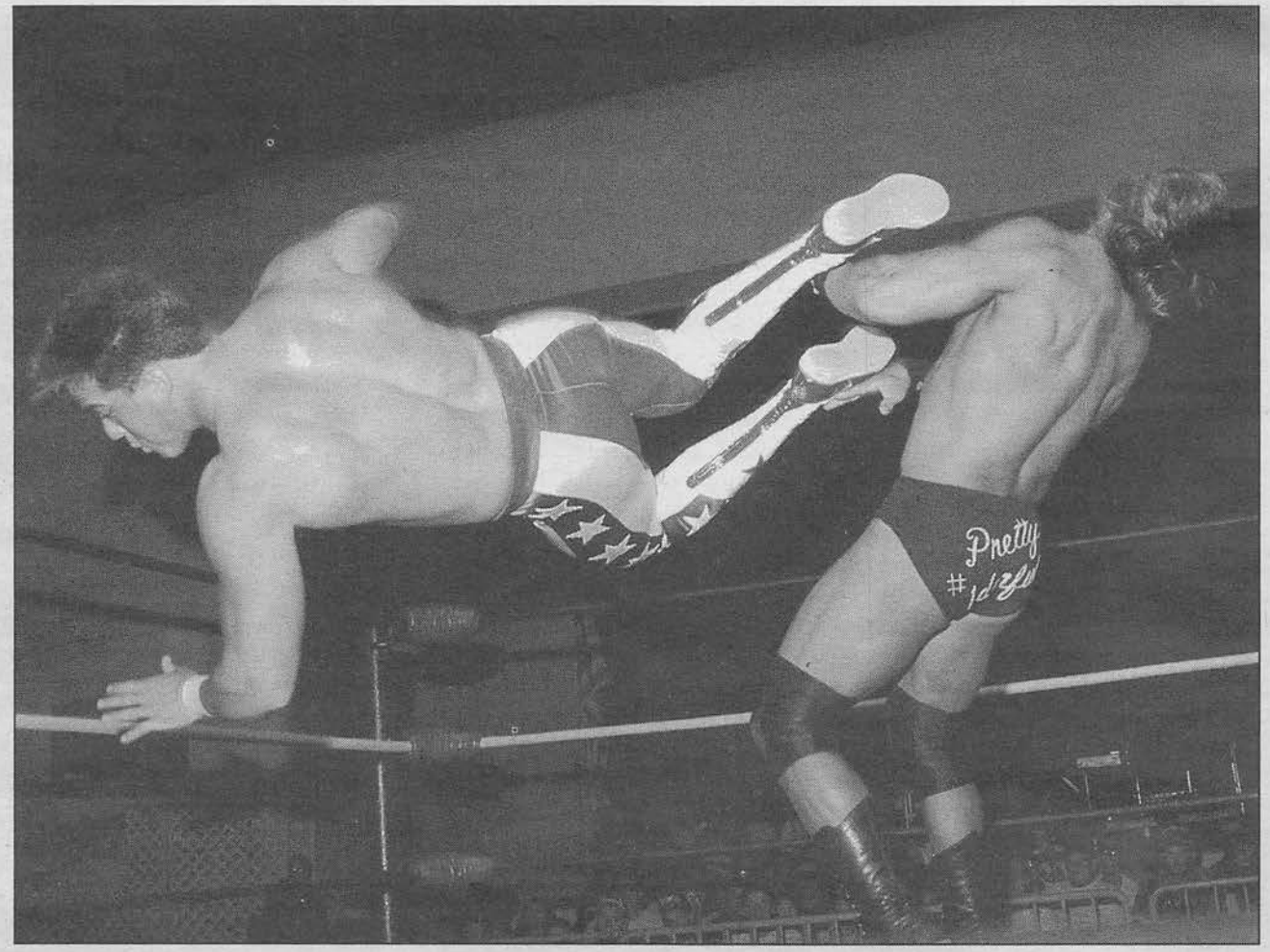
THE WRESTLER PANEL EXAMINES

RAY



MARCUS ALEXANDER BAGWELL

Each month THE WRESTLER'S panel of experts will offer candid opinions of one of wrestling's stars. Whether an up-and-coming youngster or an established superstar in his own right, our panel will always be frank and honest without fear of reprisal



Marcus Alexander Bagwell learned some flying moves during his partnership with 2 Cold Scorpio. Now part of Stars 'n' Stripes with The Patriot, he unleashes a superb dropkick against Paul Orndorff.



CAPT. LOU ALBANO

"The Captain admits he was predisposed not to like this guy, daddy, thinking he was no more than a pretty boy the girls went crazy for. But hey, I was wrong! 2 Cold Scorpio got all the ink when they wrestled together, but Marcus did the little things you need to make a tag team champion—something I know something about! He's a decent singles wrestler, too, though tags are his meal ticket. I'm sure he and The Patriot will make a fantastic combination."

Capt. Lou Albano has led 13 tag teams—most recently The Headshrinkers—to a record 17 WWF World tag team titles.



KILLER KOWALSKI

"Marcus Alexander Bagwell? Boy, that's a name that really strikes fear into the heart of an opposing wrestler! And he's cute as a button, too. *Ugh!* I'll grant that he has some skills, but I don't think much of him overall. When crunch time comes, will he allow his pretty face to be scratched or bloodied? Don't count on it! His face should appear on the cover of a magazine, all right, but it should be *Hollywood Teen Party*, not THE WRESTLER."

Killer Kowalski, one of the most sadistic rule-breakers in the sport's history, runs a wresting school in Reading, Massachusetts.



DORY FUNK JR.

"I'm beginning to see a new Marcus Bagwell now that Patriot's his partner. When he teamed with Scorpio, Marcus seemed happy to stay in the background most of the time and complement him. He knows he can't do that with Patriot, so he's starting to be more assertive. I like seeing that. He has plenty of power in that build of his, and I hope he can use it effectively. Otherwise, I wonder if he'll ever have a satisfactory singles career."

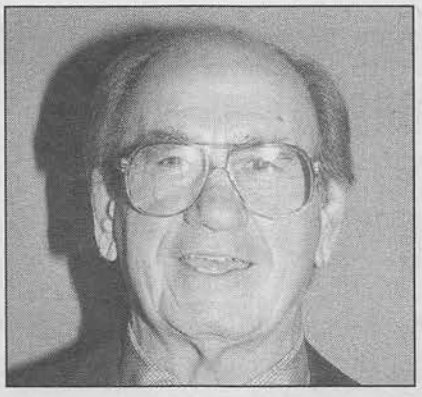
Dory Funk Jr. held the NWA World championship from 1969 to 1973. He still wrestles from time to time.



FABULOUS MOOLAH

"That Marcus Bagwell is a handsome devil, dearie. Too bad he wrestles like an angel! I just don't like that attitude of his—it's not nearly mean enough. He meanders through his matches, content to do his part, and that's about it. No wonder he prefers tag teams! I'd give up on the guy, darlin', but every now and then I do see him make an exceptional move or two. So the potential is definitely there. I'd love to see what he could do with a killer instinct."

Fabulous Moolah, the finest woman wrestler in history, held the World title for 28 years. She trains wrestlers in Columbia, South Carolina.



LOU THESZ

"Bagwell proves that nice guys can be winners, and that cooperative attitude is good for a tag team wrestler. But in order to have a great singles career, he'll have to learn to take charge. He's a reasonably good technical wrestler, so he has the tools. And he's still young enough to change and mature. Remember, not so long ago people perceived Bret Hart as a tag team competitor. There's no reason why Marcus can't eventually capture a singles belt."

Lou Thesz held the NWA World title six times during his fabulous 50-year career. Many consider him the greatest all-around wrestler ever.



GORDON SOLIE

"It would be easy for Marcus to succeed by emphasizing his looks over what he does in the ring, but to his credit, he hasn't. He has worked hard to improve his wrestling, and knows full well the importance of chemistry in tag teams. He was a perfect partner for Scorpio's aerial feats, and seems to mesh well with Patriot. These days, few wrestlers make tag teams their top priority. By finding a new partner so quickly, Marcus is thankfully an exception."

Gordon Solie has expertly analyzed pro wrestling on television for 35 years. He periodically appears on WCW broadcasts.

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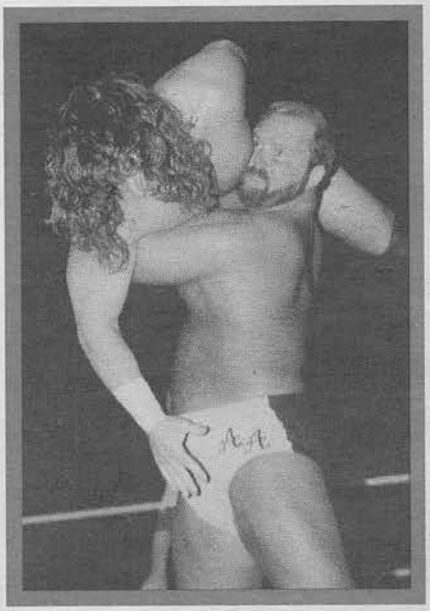
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WRESTLING FROM A TO Z

A Gripping Glossary Of Grappling Greatness!

Special Section!



Every child knows his ABCs. So should every wrestling fan, no matter how old! From Anderson to Zenk, here's the most comprehensive and offbeat look at the sport you've ever seen!

BASEBALL HAS ITS encyclopedia, containing the records of every man who played in the Major Leagues since 1876. Basketball, football, and hockey also have their respective record books and media guides. But wrestling is left out in the cold; there's no media guide, no complete encylopedia of the sport.



The editors of THE WRESTLER are here to change that.

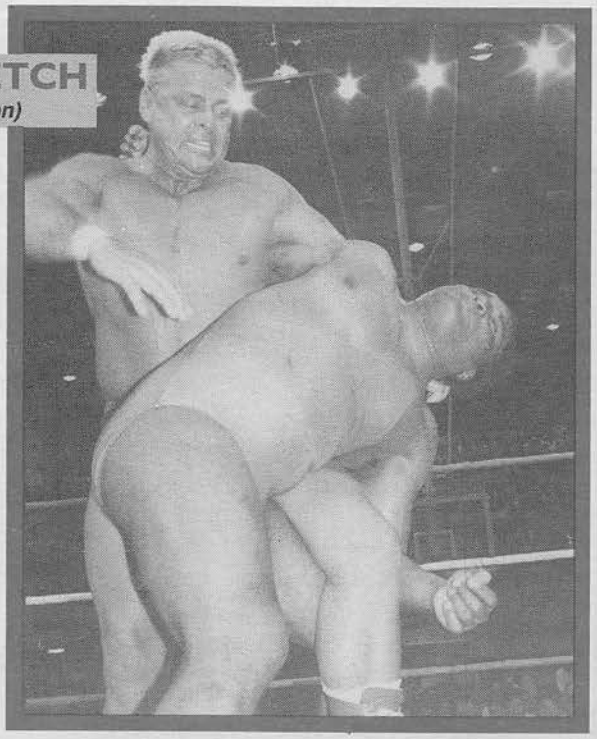
Although we're not quite up to the project of compiling a comprehensive, 1,000-page encyclopedia of wrestling, we thought it would be a great idea to compile an A-to-Z listing, an *Encyclopedia Of Mayhem,* if you will.

So "Wrestling From A To Z" was born, a special section that tracks all the names, trends, words, and numbers that combine to make up this great sport. It's a free-wheeling attempt to make order out of chaos...and have a little fun in the process!

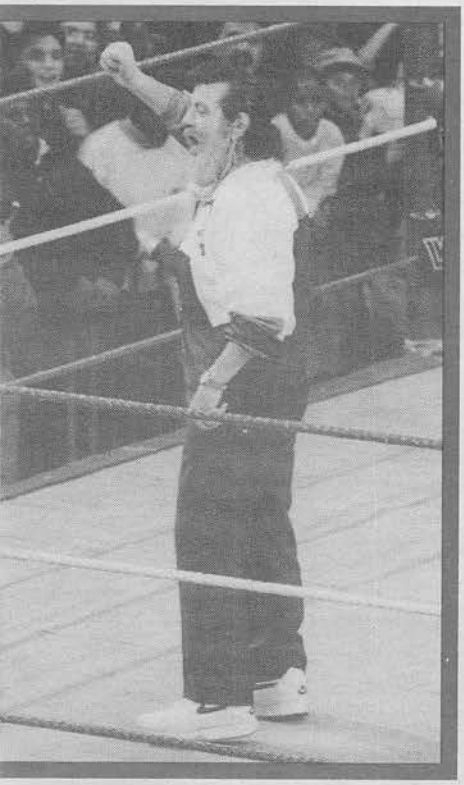
It may not be the most comprehensive encyclopedia of wrestling you've ever seen, but we hope it's the most entertaining! Enjoy!

A is for...

ABDOMINAL STRETCH
Ron Garvin (vs. Carlos Colon)



CAPT. LOU ALBANO



Abdominal stretch, one of wrestling's lost holds. Many are the wrestlers who have screamed out in pain when an opponent has applied this hold. But as the sport has evolved over the years, certain holds have been left behind, and this is one of them. Apparently, nobody besides us is bemoaning its demise.

Albano, as in Captain Lou. The "Guiding Light" has managed 13 different tag teams to a total of 17 WWF World tag team titles, and the list can grow again at any time! Albano is undoubtedly the finest manager of tag teams in wrestling history. On top of that, he has donated countless hours to charity and is always willing to make personal appearances. It's hard to believe Albano was once one of the most hated and ruthless individuals in wrestling.

Anarchy—ECW style! Rules in ECW are rarely enforced, and sometimes it seems its promoters take special pleasure in creating ways to make things get out of hand. It's the federation that brings out the most violent and dangerous qualities in its stars. Sneak-attacks are rarely punished. Interference is virtually encouraged. Winning the heavyweight title means hanging on for the wildest ride of your life (just ask Shane Douglas and Sabu). Sure, there are federations with much greater talent, but there isn't a federation in the world with wilder action.

Arn Anderson, one of the most devious and dangerous wrestlers in the world. Dustin Rhodes recently found out the hard way that "The Enforcer" can't be trusted, but his father, Dusty, should have told him that a long time ago (and probably did).

Atlanta, home of Turner Broadcasting—whose various outlets may have carried more matches than any other TV outlet in North America—and World Championship Wrestling. These days, Atlanta is the center of the wrestling universe, as Ted Turner's playland is playing host to most of the nation's top stars—including a revitalized Hulk Hogan!

B is for...

Bash, as in Great American. Once a touring event, the Great American Bash developed into a one-shot mid-summer spectacular that has usurped Starrcade as the number-one event on the WCW pay-per-view calendar. In fact, it just might be the number-one event on the *entire* wrestling calendar: This year, for the first time, the Bash outdrew the WWF's most recent PPV event, King of the Ring! Anybody want to bet that Hulk Hogan had something to do with that?!

Blood. Where would we be without our six quarts? Dead, that's where. So how come wrestlers such as Dusty Rhodes, Abdullah the Butcher, Jerry Lawler, Terry Funk, and Jake Roberts, who have lost their six quarts many times over, are still alive and kicking? Blood keeps flowing freely from gashes and cuts, despite (most) promoters' best efforts to make wrestling more of a family sport. Hey, families bleed, too, don't they?

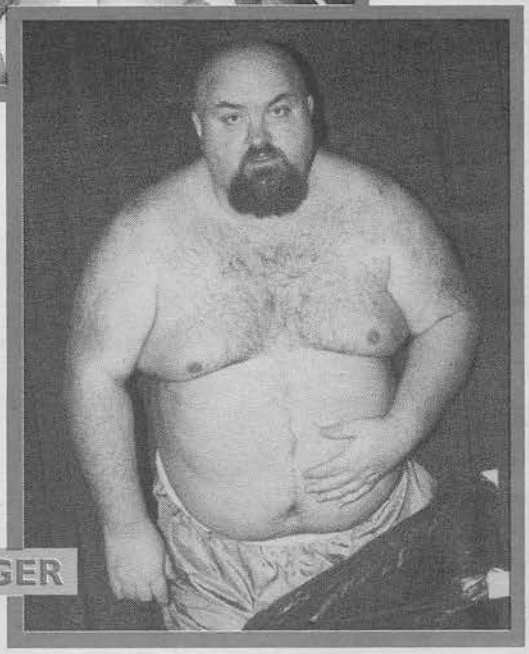
Bastion Booger, the aptly named nightmare who thankfully has disappeared from the WWF scene. This disgusting piece of work took pride in stuffing as much food as possible down his throat—and, occasionally, the throats of his opponents! Now Mr. Booger stars in Midwest independents, where he values a large pizza more than a championship belt.

Brock, as in Matt, the wise old sage of wrestling journalism and a timeless relic of the mat world's past. Stuffy, stiff, and grouchy, Brock's hard to be around for long, but he's forgotten more about wrestling than most people ever knew. Whether Matt's "Looking Back" or just "Plain Speaking," his opinion is always entertaining. He's the Red Smith of wrestling.

Bunkhouse Stampede, a type of wrestling match almost forgotten about—until Bunkhouse Buck invaded WCW and declared himself the King of the Bunkhouse Stampede, setting off a feud with Dustin Rhodes, whose father, Dusty, is the undisputed King of the Bunkhouse Stampede



BLOOD
Abdullah the Butcher vs. Kevin Sullivan



BASTION BOOGER

C is for...

Cage, as in steel cage matches, one of the most dangerous and exciting spectacles in wrestling. We're seeing less of them these days in the WWF and WCW, but that doesn't mean cage matches have any less fascination. The editors of THE WRESTLER are philosophically against cage matches, but that doesn't mean we don't enjoy a good one!

Chairs, one of wrestling's most important props. Always handy at ringside—whether there's an official sitting in one or a free seat—chairs too often become weapons in wrestling matches. When Terry Funk wrestles in ECW, the ring is often showered with them!

Clothesline, one of wrestling's most devastating moves. Whether it's The Road Warriors' famed clothesline off the top rope—which somehow hasn't killed anyone—or a stiff arm delivered by Hulk Hogan, the clothesline always has a devastating effect. No wonder they're illegal in football!



CAGE MATCH
Diesel vs. Razor Ramon

Cocky. As in Rick Rude, Jeff Jarrett, Shawn Michaels, Steve Austin, Steve Regal, and so many other wrestlers who reverently worship themselves. Somehow, cockiness and deafness must go hand-in-hand: Don't these guys hear the boos of the crowd when they come to the ring?!

Court, where too many wrestlers and wrestling personalities have been spending time the past few years. In 1994 alone, Jesse Ventura won a civil suit against the WWF, a former preliminary wrestler was awarded a large judgment against the WWF, Jerry Lawler was acquitted of all charges in a statutory rape case, and Vince McMahon was acquitted of all charges in his federal steroid distribution trial. Seems like there's more action outside the ring than in it these days!



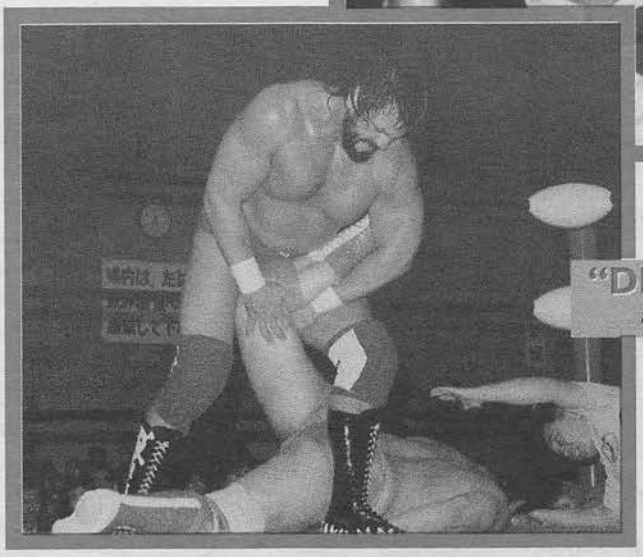
CHAIRS
Funks vs. Public Enemy

D is for...

DiBiase, the WWF's influential "Million-Dollar Man." Ted, who loves throwing his money around, thinks he can buy anyone. But he had to settle for an imitation Undertaker. That set off a feud with the real Undertaker and manager Paul Bearer. What's next for DiBiase? All that's certain is WWF fans will continue hating him. And even money can't buy Ted love!


TED DiBIASE

Dirty tricks, the kind practiced by rulebreakers everywhere, the kind displayed by a masked man who pulled a Tonya Harding on Hulk Hogan and clubbed his leg at Clash of the Champions XXVII. But this dirty trick backfired: Hogan made it to the ring and retained his WCW World title. Of course, there are plenty more dirty tricks where that one came from!

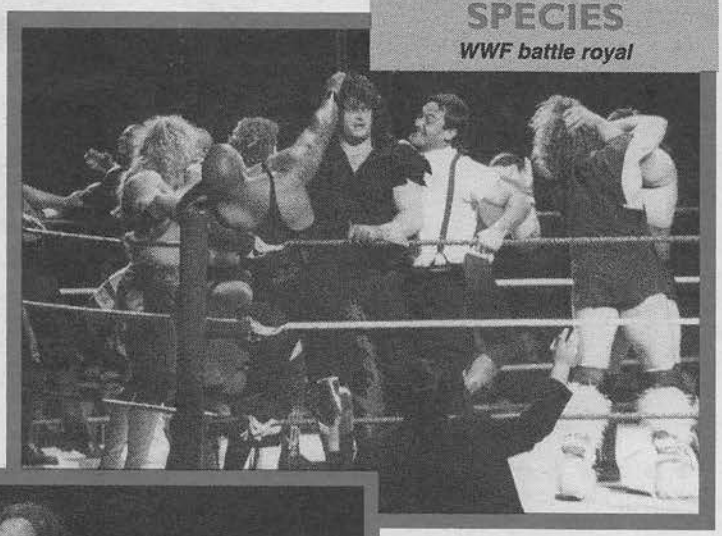

"DR. DEATH"
Steve Williams

Disqualifications, which we despise, because they usually mean managerial interference, use of a foreign object, or possible injury; they always mean that there isn't a clear winner or loser.

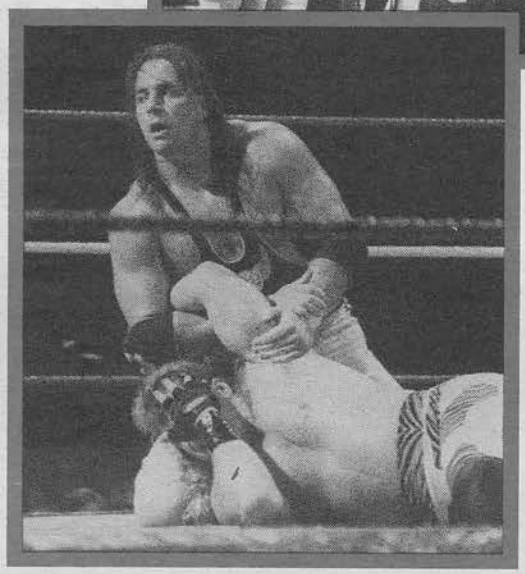
Dr. Death. Great nickname, great wrestler. Steve "Dr. Death" Williams recently won the Triple Crown Championship in Japan, but we knew long before that what Doc is made of. Tough as nails, harder than rocks, Williams is famous for demanding, "Sew me up, doc, I've got a match tonight," after he took 109 stitches in his eye during a matinee card. They don't come any tougher.

Dropkick, which is one of the most underrated moves in the sport. Once a spectacle, now a commonplace maneuver, the dropkick (when properly executed) can have devastating impact on its opponent. To see a great dropkick on display, just watch a match featuring Brian Pillman, Tom Zenk, or Jeff Jarrett.

E is for...



ENDANGERED SPECIES
WWF battle royal



EXCELLENCE OF EXECUTION
Bret Hart (vs. Shawn Michaels)

Earnings. Cash, greenbacks, moolah (fabulous to be sure, but we're not referring to her). Six- and seven-figure salaries are commonplace in wrestling these days, thanks to the explosion of pay-per-view and cable-TV. Once upon a time, the best wrestlers in the world were lucky if they made $50,000 a year. Today, if you're not cutting six figures in wrestling, you're just not making the grade. And if you're not making seven figures, then you're not Hulk Hogan.

Endangered species. Among the endangered species in wrestling: six-man tag teams, women's tag teams, battle royals, traditional cage matches, TV titles, masked wrestlers, enemies of Big Van Vader, animals at ringside, women at ringside, midget wrestlers who don't speak Spanish, independent federations, monthly magazines that only come out 12 times a year, fans who don't get cable-TV, and Bill Apter's hair.

England. It's where Lord Steven Regal and Davey Boy Smith were born, and it has become a favored touring spot of the WWF and WCW. Indeed, enthusiasm for the mat sport in England is not unlike the explosion of wrestling interest that occurred in the U.S. a decade ago!

Evolution. Boy, how our sport has evolved! Wrestling's supermen around the turn of the century would be considered light heavyweights today. Bob Backlund would've been reactionary in the 1920s. Gorgeous George? Try comparing him to Adrian Street, Adrian Adonis, and Johnny B. Badd. Imagine Hulk Hogan in the ring in the '40s! The more things change, the more they *don't* stay the same!

Excellence of execution. His name is Bret Hart, and he's the two-time WWF World heavyweight champion. The "Hitman's" most recent title reign began at WrestleMania X, and there's no end in sight. Hart makes very few mistakes, especially in crucial matches, and that's why—apologies to Owen—he's the *real* King of the Ring.

Figure-four leglock. Invented by Buddy Rogers and perfected brilliantly by fellow "Nature Boy" Ric Flair, the figure-four leglock is now in wide use—and misuse. Once a devastating finishing maneuver, the move seems to have lost its potency (credit all the advanced defensive training methods for this) ... even when it is applied by ...

Flair. The 10-time WCW and WWF world champion is one of the greatest wrestlers of the past two decades, and only Hulk Hogan can make a case for being better. Flair is fond of saying that to be the man, you have to beat the man. Given his record of excellence and domination, the "Nature Boy" truly is the man.

Flying. Whether it's high flying or "Flyin'" Brian, wrestling has gone airborne over the past few years. Wrestlers such as Sabu, Jushin Liger, The Great Muta, 2 Cold Scorpio, and Pillman seemingly spend more time in the air than on the mat! Even Vader and Terry Funk execute moonsaults regularly!

Frankensteiner. One of the most devastating moves of recent years, the "Frankensteiner's" creator was, naturally, Scott Steiner. And once he took it out of the laboratory and into the ring, it terrorized the wrestling countryside! Other wrestlers have copied and adapted the move, but none is as monstrous as the original.

Funks. Whether it's Terry, Dory Jr., or Dory Sr. (forget about Jimmy Jack Funk, who's not a Funk at all), you're talking about one of the toughest, bravest wrestling families the sport has ever seen. Though both Dory Jr. and Terry are over 50 years old, they can still battle and brawl like men half their age! Incredible!

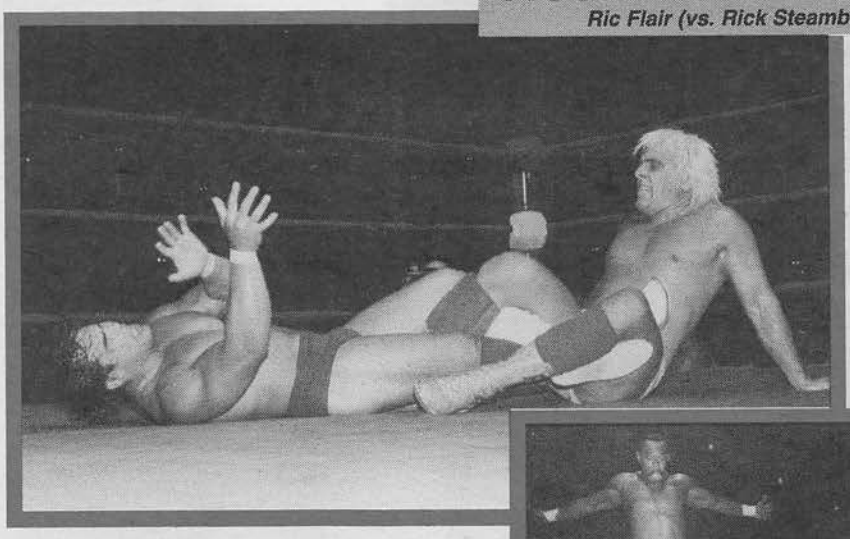
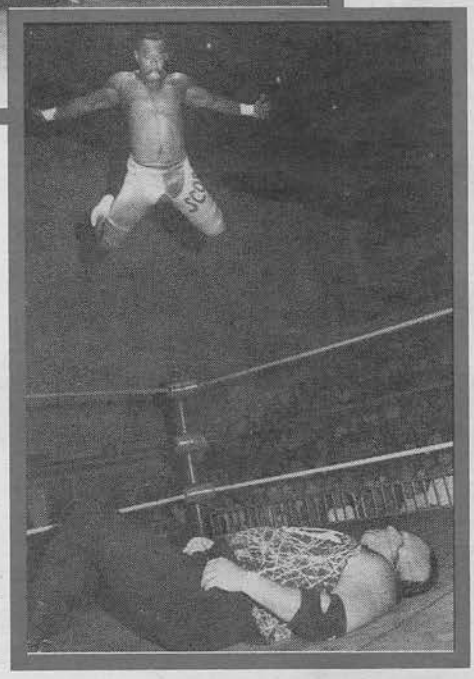
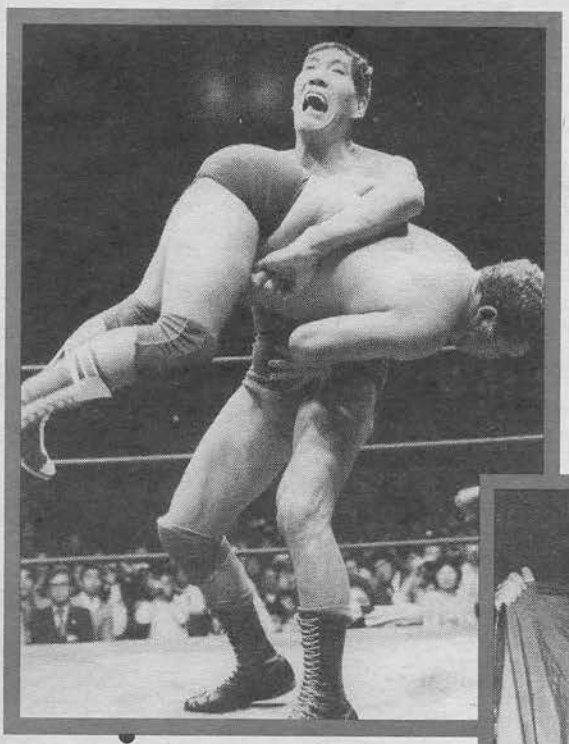


FIGURE-FOUR LEGLOCK
Ric Flair (vs. Rick Steamboat)



FLYING
2 Cold Scorpio (vs. Jerry Sags)

F is for...



GIANT
Giant Baba



GRANDIOSE
Rick Rude's tights

G is for...

Giants. Andre, Baba, and Gonzales. And John Studd, a big man who didn't put "Giant" in front of his name, but now instructs someone who does in "Giant" Ron Reis. "Giant-like" Blackjack Mulligan. And so many more. Wrestling is the biggest of sports, and it's had more than its share of big men!

Global Wrestling Federation, which keeps the long-standing tradition of tough Texas wrestling alive. The GWF features such Lone Star stalwarts as Chris Adams, Rod Price, Iceman Parsons, Terry Gordy, Jimmy Garvin, Moadib, and Scott Putski, and their cards are as action-packed as can be.

Gold, the championship kind, the kind that rests around Razor Ramon's waist, not his neck. Championship gold is the goal of every wrestler who competes, and every champion wears his belt with pride, from the champion of the tiniest independent organization all the way up to WCW World champion Hulk Hogan.

Gordon. ECW Commissioner Tod? If you like, but we had veteran broadcaster Solie in mind. The voice of wrestling for four decades can still be heard on WCW telecasts, where his encyclopedic knowledge of wrestling and wrestlers is displayed weekly. There isn't a greater spokesman for the sport, nor a finer sports announcer in the world.

Grandiose. Ric Flair's ring robes. Rick Rude's tights. High-volume entrance music. Fireworks. Michael Buffer's flashy, classy introductions. Jimmy Hart's clothes. WrestleMania. Where would the sport be without it all?

H is for...

Hardcore. From Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and ECW to Knoxville, Tennessee and Smoky Mountain Wrestling to Los Angeles, California and AAA, promotions are thriving by selling to a hardcore audience: fans who want more than mat wrestling, who want hard-hitting action, blood, violence, specialty matches, chains, barbed-wire, and more. Hardcore wrestling, as ECW proclaims of itself, is not for everybody—but it's a sight to see!

Harts. From Calgary, there's WWF World champion Bret and WWF King of the Ring Owen (as well as Bruce, Keith, Ross, Smith, and Wayne) and, of course, their famous father, Stu. Jimmy (no relation to the Calgary Harts) is a famous manager. It's a family, it's a feud, it's a managerial success story. You gotta have Hart!

Hollywood. That means movies, folks! Like *Rocky III, Surburban Commando, Mr. Nanny,* and *No Holds Barred* (Hulk Hogan). Plus *They Live* (Roddy Piper), *The Princess Bride* (Andre the Giant), *The Predator* and *The Running Man* (Jesse Ventura), *Paradise Alley* (Terry Funk), and so many more. And we haven't even started talking about movies about wrestling, like *The Wrestler, All The Marbles, The One And Only...*

Hulkamania. A decade later, it's still running wild! And we're not just talking about Hulk Hogan and his millions of fans, we're talking about T-shirts, headbands, foam fingers, action figures, vitamins, movies, TV shows...and world championship belts! Maybe Hulk is right: "Hulkamania" *will* live forever!

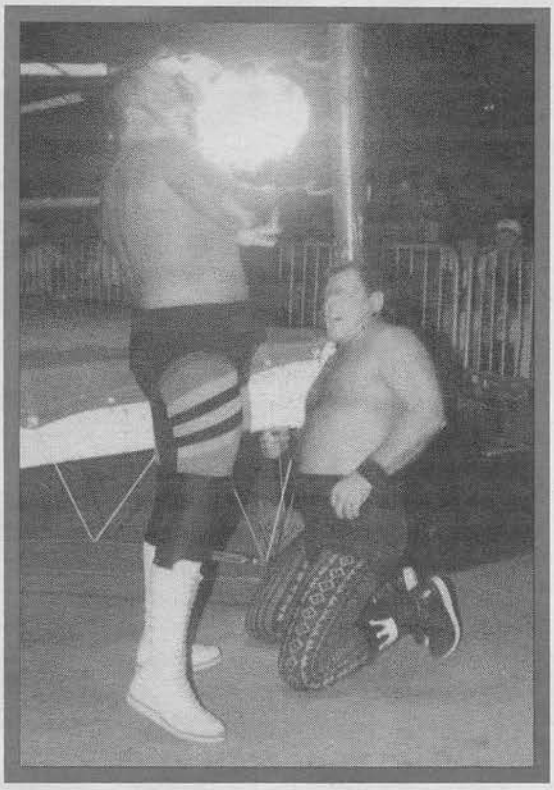
Hyatt. The goddess who alternately terrorized and seduced WCW and its fans for years is now in New York, seeking fame and fortune on the stage and screen. We miss her voluptuous curves, long legs, and blonde hair. And maybe you remember her screechy voice, her constant interference in matches...you know something? Maybe we don't miss Missy after all!



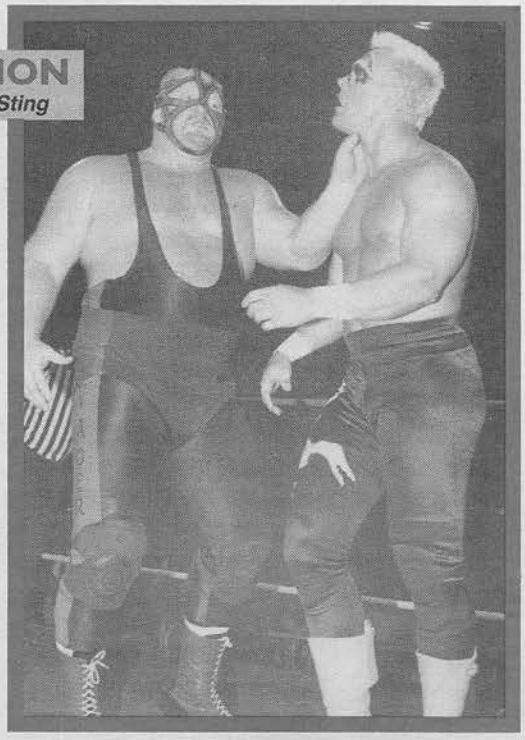
HARTS
And plenty of 'em!



HYATT
Missy



ILLICIT
Lawler vs. Graham



INTIMIDATION
Big Van Vader vs. Sting

I is for...

Illicit. Webster's defines *illicit* as "not legally permitted." Among the things not legally permitted—but nonetheless commonplace—in wrestling are: foreign objects, managerial interference, throwing an opponent over the top rope, sneak-attacks, double- and triple-teaming, choking, using closed-fist punches, and throwing fire and other foreign objects (such as green slime, salt, white powder, chairs, etc.). I is clearly not only for *illicit,* but also for *intense*!

Injuries. They happen—frequently—because wrestling is the toughest sport on the planet. Think we're exaggerating? Just ask Hulk Hogan (his knee got toasted at the most recent Clash), Cactus Jack (remember the Vader power bomb?), Brian Pillman (his leg injury cost The Hollywood Blonds the WCW World tag team title and led to his breakup with Steve Austin), and just about anyone who steps into the ring on a regular basis. No wonder most insurance companies won't write a policy for a pro wrestler!

Insults. Bobby "The Brain" Heenan cuts deeply with his sharp wit. Ted DiBiase insults the fans. Rick Rude calls fans and opponents stupid, out-of-shape, mutants. Jerry Lawler gets paid to spew out insults on WWF telecasts. Wrestlers and fans alike are the targets of innumerable insults from...wrestlers and fans alike.

Intercontinental. The WWF Intercontinental title, one of the most sought-after crowns in wrestling, has been worn by such standouts as Randy Savage, Tito Santana, The Ultimate Warrior, Curt Hennig, Greg Valentine, Rick Steamboat, and The Honky Tonk Man. Many people see it as a steppingstone to the WWF World title, but the I-C belt surely stands on its own as a symbol of wrestling excellence.

Intimidation. It can win a match before the opening bell rings. Anybody who faces Big Van Vader knows about his history of violence. Sabu and Cactus Jack intimidate by their reputations for recklessness. The Undertaker intimidates through purely bizarre behavior. Never underestimate the power of intimidation: It's as vital to a successful wrestler as a solid clothesline or a well-timed dropkick.

J is for...

Jack. Cactus Jack, who has found a home in ECW after years of battling and getting scarred in WCW. The madman from Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, set new standards for the sport in terms of taking two punches to land one, and he'll undoubtedly thrive on the independent circuit—where he'll vie for brawling supremacy with the equally reckless Sabu!

Japan. Many of wrestling's most enthusiastic fans feel the action is best in Japan, thanks to the mix of non-stop action, outstanding technical and aerial wrestlers, and intelligent and demanding fans. Many of the sport's greatest stars are Japanese: Antonio Inoki, Genichiro Tenryu, Giant Baba, Riki Choshu, Masa Chono, The Great Muta, Jushin Liger, and so many more. They travel to the States occasionally, but the luckiest U.S. fans are those who have had the chance to travel overseas and see these stars on their home turf.

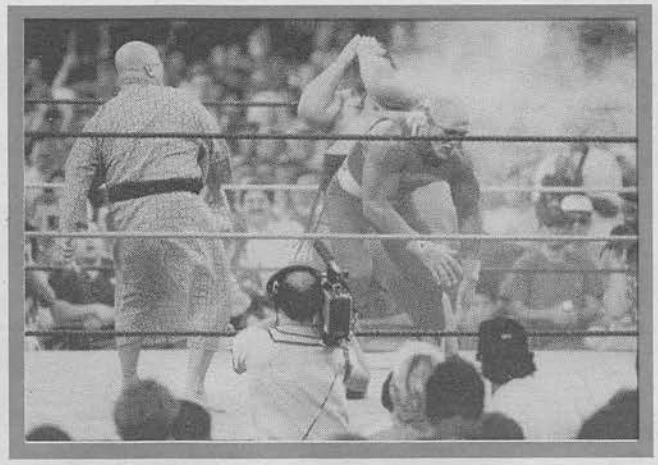
Jarrett. Promoter Jerry and his son, Jeff, are as much a fixture on the Memphis wrestling scene as Jerry Lawler himself. And Jeff, like Lawler, has made his mark in the WWF, where he most recently battled Mabel in a country music vs. rap match at SummerSlam '94.

Jet lag, which is an aspect of the sport that is seldom discussed. When wrestlers travel from the U.S. to Europe or Japan and back, or from the West Coast to the East Coast, they find themselves competing fatigued. That they can still compete so effectively is a testament to their training and endurance.

Justice. Which is served when a fan favorite gets revenge against a rule-breaker, or when interference and cheating backfires. It happens more than you might think. Good has a strange way of triumphing over evil in the squared circle, where life's lessons are often taught in graphic fashion. Justice is served when a manager, such as Mr. Fuji, throws salt at his man's opponent, perhaps Hulk Hogan, and instead hits Yokozuna, leading to Hogan's victory for the WWF World title.



CACTUS JACK
vs. Terry Funk



JUSTICE
Being served at WrestleMania IX

K is for...



KILT
Roddy Piper's brings him trouble



KWANG
Bizarre charisma

Kamikaze. As in Sabu, Jushin Liger, The Kid, and Cactus Jack. They put their lives on the line to perform incredible feats of skill and craziness: moonsaults onto tables, diving through the ropes and out of the ring, amazing and dangerous aerial flights of fury. Yes, these reckless stars are entertaining as they can be...but at what personal cost?

Kilt. It's not a dress—right, Roddy?—it's the traditional Scottish garb worn for centuries. And it has caused Piper more trouble in his career than he cares to recall! Insulting Piper's kilt is like belittling Tatanka's headdress or abusing Bret Hart's parents...and brings with it painful consequences! Right, Jerry Lawler?

King. And speaking of Lawler, Jerry "The King" has ruled Memphis wrestling for nearly three decades. He can be hated everywhere else in the world, but Memphis' knowledgeable wrestling fans never stop loving him. Sure he throws fire, and he's been known to throw a closed-fist punch once in a while, but Lawler can do no wrong at the Mid-South Coliseum!

Kneedrop. Sharper and more painful than Hulk Hogan's legdrop, a well-placed knee to the chest—sometimes from the top turnbuckle!—can finish off a near-beaten opponent with ease. The kneedrop is best used as a finishing maneuver because it's so easy for the intended victim to roll out if he isn't half-conscious. And by the way, a rhetorical question: Who needs foreign objects when the human body comes equipped with knees and elbows?

Kwang, who continues to hold a remarkable fascination for us. He may not win many matches, and when he does, they may not be against the greatest opponents, but there's a bizarre charisma about him that can't be denied. Can it?

Legends. Wrestling certainly has its share, and the sport has been rediscovering its roots recently. Events like Slamboree and the WWF's Hall of Fame dinner have revived interest in the rich history of the ring, for which we couldn't be happier.

Little men. We're talking about midgets, such as AAA sensation Mascarita Sagrada, and little big men, like The Kid. Yes, wrestling is by nature a sport for big men, but light heavyweights and midgets have also thrived for decades. Don't ever sell these guys short!

Losers. Everyone loves a champion like Hulk Hogan or Bret Hart. But be honest: Don't you just love a loser, too? You can't help but pull for an underdog like Frankie Lancaster, Larry Santo, Tony Roy, or Duane Gill. Because any given wrestler on any given night will somehow, some way, some day...

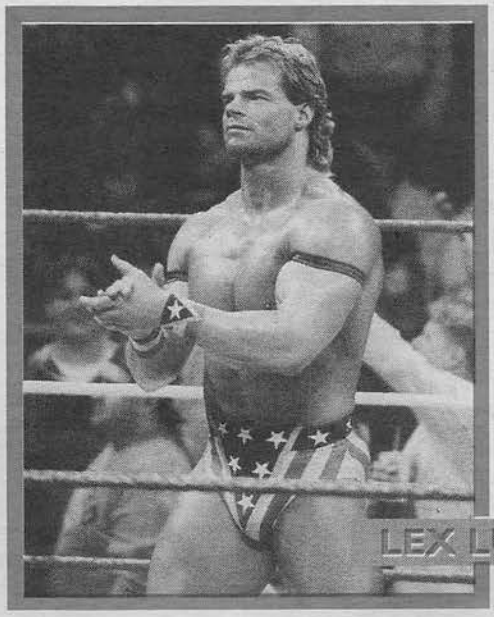
Luger. Lex Luger, "The Total Package." "The Narcissist." The next Hulk Hogan, if you believed us eight years ago. A major underachiever, though he does have a WCW World title to his credit. And he remains one of the most talented and popular wrestlers in the world. We were pleased to learn that Luger didn't sell out to Ted DiBiase; if history tells us anything, it's that Luger is better off on his own. And since he's still young, there might be another world title or two left in him.

Lucha Libre. Make sure you turn on the TV if you're browsing through the listings and come across these words. "Lucha Libre" means "wrestling" in Spanish, these days generally indicating Mexico's AAA promotion. Although you won't understand the commentary unless you speak Spanish, you should have no trouble understanding the high-intensity action in the ring. The good news is that AAA is starting to make headway north of the border. Enjoy!

LEGENDS
Being honored at Slamboree '94

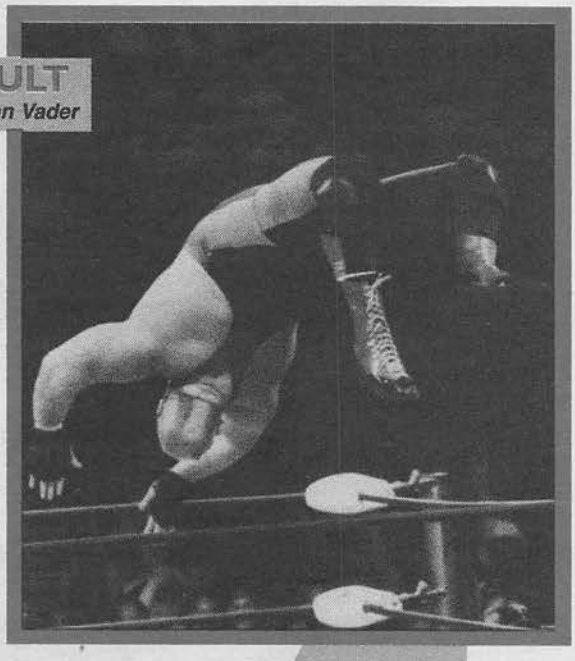


is for...





MASK
This one belongs to Mil Mascaras



MOONSAULT
Executed by Big Van Vader

M *is for...*

Madison Square Garden, the world's most famous arena. There was a time when the Garden would be packed with more than 22,000 screaming fans once a month on a memorable Monday night. They'd pack into the main arena—and sometimes into the adjacent Felt Forum for the closed-circuit telecast—and watch Bruno Sammartino defend the WWF World title. Later, they saved their enthusiasm for Bob Backlund and Hulk Hogan. Today, the WWF rarely runs cards in the Garden, and when they do, they draw only a few thousand. The times, they are a-changing.

Masks, and the men who wear them. Masks contribute to the color of wrestling, and they certainly lend an air of mystery. What does Mil Mascaras look like behind one of his 1,000 masks? Only his mother knows for sure! Men like Dusty Rhodes, Brian Pillman, Barry Windham, and Bob Armstrong have worn masks to circumvent suspensions. Andre the Giant and Hulk Hogan pulled on masks and called themselves Giant Machine and Hulk Machine. And in Japan and Mexico, masks are as much a part of a wrestler's ring garb as trunks and boots!

McMahon. Vince, of course, head of the WWF and the man who changed wrestling forever. In the mid-'80s, he transformed wrestling from a regionalized sport to a national sensation. In the mid-'90s, he'll attempt to rebound from a potentially devastating steroid trial to steer the sport into the 21st century.

Monster Factory, Larry Sharpe's famous training grounds for aspiring wrestlers. Located in South Jersey, it has been the proving ground for dozens of stars, including the massive Bam Bam Bigelow, King Kong Bundy, Virgil, Tatanka, and Papa Shango. Sharpe says he can teach anyone how to wrestle. If you think you've got what it takes, give them a call. (Try the Yellow Pages under "Obliteration.")

Moonsault. Once the kind of move only aerial artists such as Jushin Liger, The Great Muta, and Lightning Kid would attempt, the moonsault has become wrestling's hot maneuver: Even stars like Big Van Vader and Terry Funk use it!

N is for...

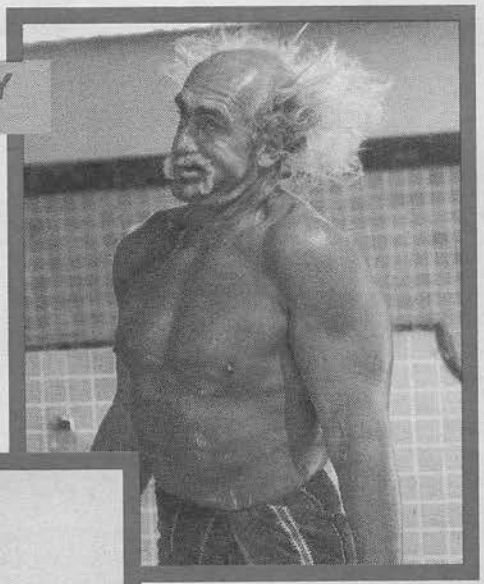
Nakano. WWF World Women's champion Alundra Blayze didn't have any competition...until Bull Nakano flew in from Japan. Now the women's scene is heating up and getting some attention. Bull vs. Blayze has become one of the hottest feuds in wrestling. That's because Nakano is big enough and tough enough to take everything Blayze dishes out...and then some!

Nanny. That's *Mr. Nanny*, the movie, a complete bomb. It convinced Hollywood executives that Hulk Hogan should concentrate on the squared circle and the small screen. Want another nanny? Try Nanny Simpson, the Memphis maid who turned out to be Chris Adams' estranged wife, Toni.

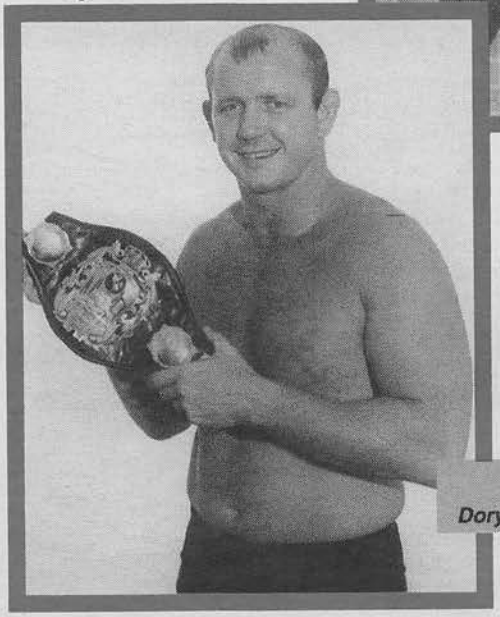
Nefarious. Sherri Martel is extremely mean and wicked. So are Woman, Tammy Fytch, Ted DiBiase, Paul E. Dangerously, Harley Race, Big Van Vader, Eddie Gilbert...in fact, all too many wrestlers and managers fall under the definition of *nefarious*. Why can't N be for Nice?

93,173. That was the attendance for WrestleMania III at The Silverdome in Pontiac, Michigan, as Andre the Giant battled Hulk Hogan for the WWF World title. It's an attendance record that will probably stand forever. The crowd came to see a wrestling classic, and they saw one, but it wasn't Hogan vs. Andre: It was Rick Steamboat beating Randy Savage for the Intercontinental title in 1987's Match of the Year.

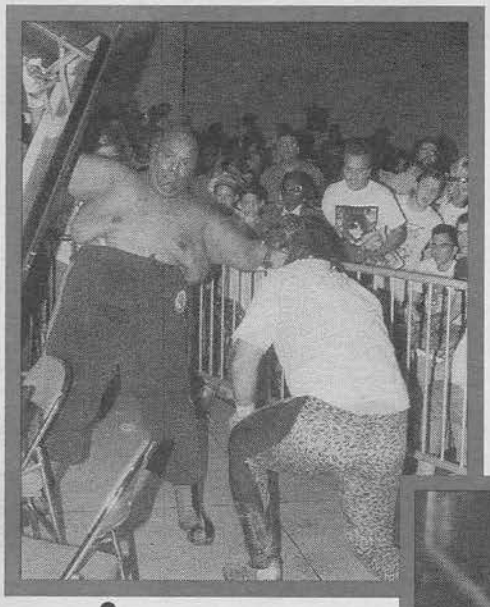
NWA. It's the oldest sanctioning body in the sport, but it's been practically inactive for years. It resurfaced recently in Philadelphia as Shane Douglas won a tournament to crown a new NWA champion. However, Douglas immediately renounced the title, leaving the federation in limbo once more. Can the NWA be revived, or are its glory days gone forever?



MR. NANNY
A complete bomb



NWA
Dory Funk was World champ in '69



OBESE
Check out Abdullah's flaps!



ODDITIES
Luna Vachon—odd? Indeed!

is for...

Obese. Wrestling has had more than its share of overweight competitors: King Kong Bundy, Gorilla Monsoon, Haystacks Calhoun, Yokozuna, One Man Gang, Crusher Blackwell, Abdullah the Butcher, Bam Bam Bigelow, Mighty Wilbur, Norman, Typhoon, and Earthquake come immediately to mind. Agility is great, but there's nothing in the sport like a thunderous sitdown splash!

Oddities. Again, wrestling has had more than its share of mutants in the ring. The Missing Link, George "The Animal" Steele, Luna Vachon, The Canadian Wolfman, Prince Kharis, Tasmaniac, and Lucifer are among the oddest people we've ever seen. We'd love to see a collection of their driver's license photos!

Orndorff. As in Paul or "Paula," depending on your opinion of "Mr. Wonderful." In either case, he is alive and well and currently holding WCW's World tag team title with Paul Roma. Despite his massive ego, Orndorff is a fine wrestler—and one of Hulk Hogan's many tag team partners gone bad. Perhaps he'd like another run at the "Hulkster" sometime; we wonder what Roma would think of that!

Outside the ring, where the really dangerous action takes place. That's where a wrestler can be piledrived on the cement floor, knocked over the head with the timekeeper's bell or a chair, or have his head rammed into the steel barrier separating competitor from spectator. Spend 20 seconds outside the ring and you're disqualified. So how come some wrestlers spend minutes outside the ring without getting DQ'd? Ahhh, the mysteries of wrestling!

Ovations. We hear them whenever big stars enter the ring (Sting always gets a standing one) or whenever a major title changes hands (to the good side). Wrestling fans vote with their cheers and boos, and there's no more compelling vote than a standing ovation. Right, Sting?



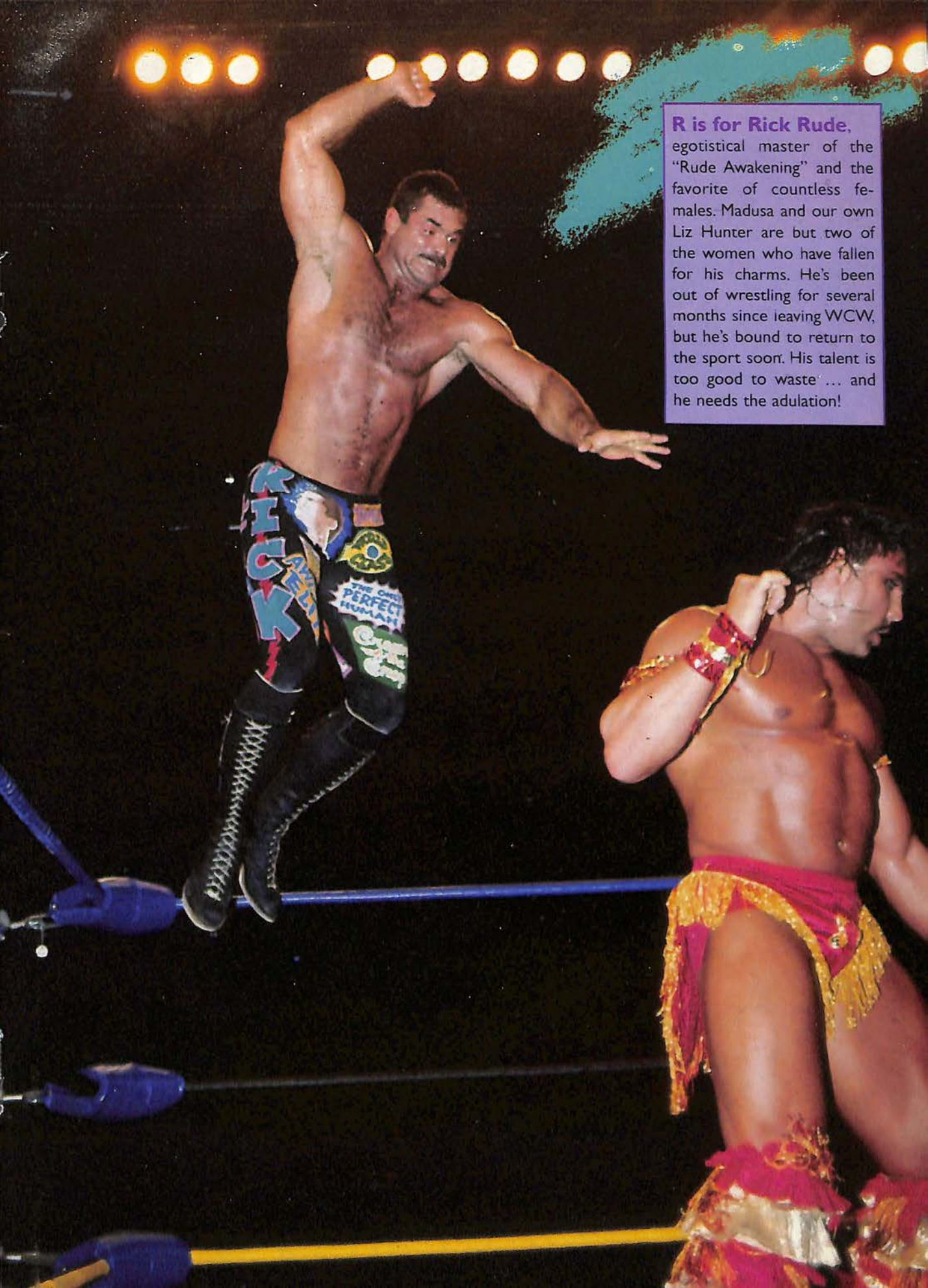
B is for Bearer...

Paul Bearer. He has a degree in mortuary science, but instead of settling down at the local cemetery, he parlayed his love for wrestling into a successful career as manager of The Undertaker (the real one, as was so convincingly proven at SummerSlam). Bearer's high-pitched voice may irritate some, but there's no doubt about it—he's "urned" all of his success in the sport!

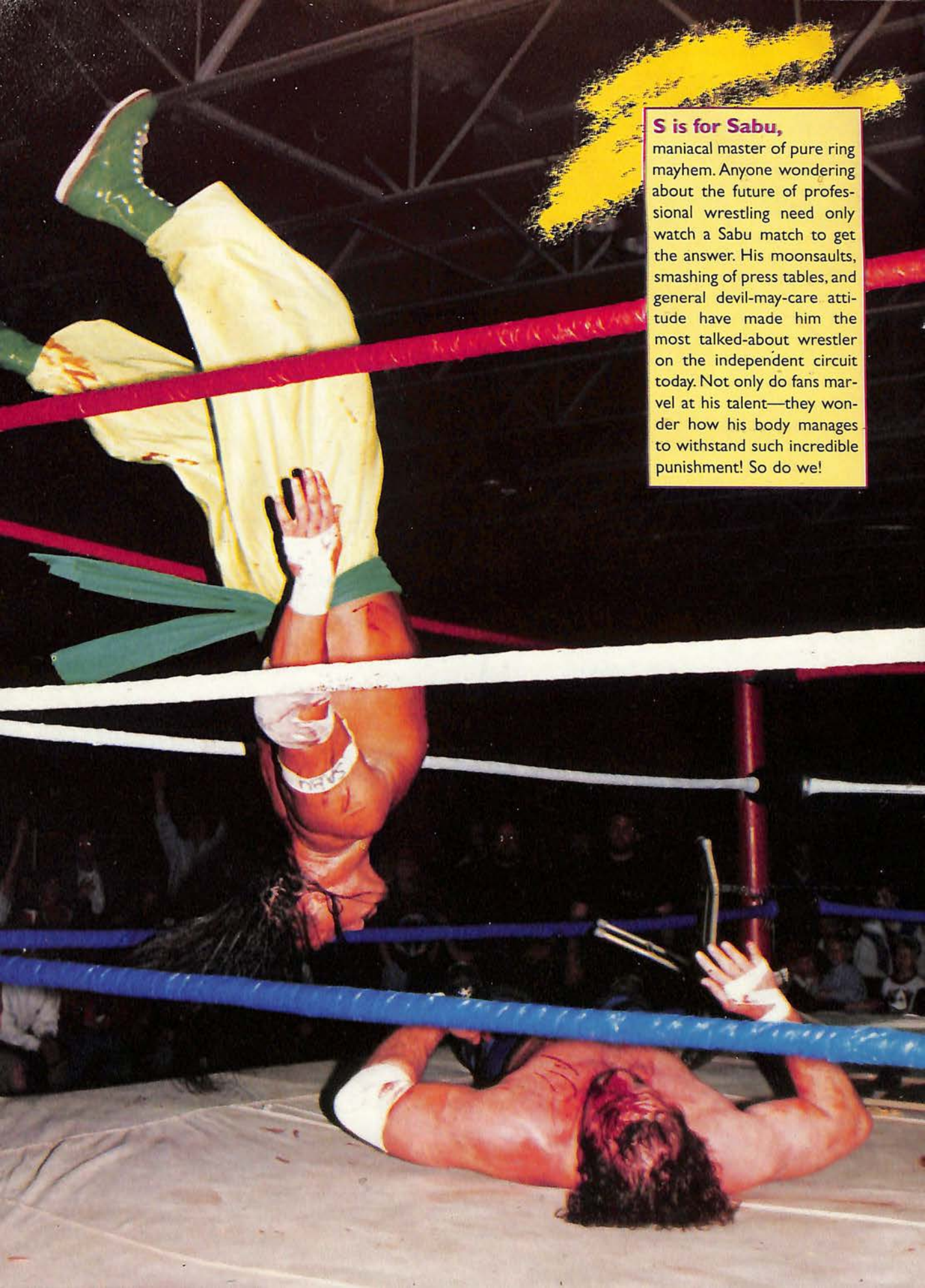


I is for Intensity.

When a wrestling match is at its best, the intensity pouring forth from both sides is infectious, easily affecting the fans in the stands and at home watching on TV. Sting and Ric Flair are two wrestlers who wrestle with great intensity all the time. If you don't share their excitement when they wrestle—get your pulse checked!



R is for Rick Rude, egotistical master of the "Rude Awakening" and the favorite of countless females. Madusa and our own Liz Hunter are but two of the women who have fallen for his charms. He's been out of wrestling for several months since leaving WCW, but he's bound to return to the sport soon. His talent is too good to waste ... and he needs the adulation!



S is for Sabu, maniacal master of pure ring mayhem. Anyone wondering about the future of professional wrestling need only watch a Sabu match to get the answer. His moonsaults, smashing of press tables, and general devil-may-care attitude have made him the most talked-about wrestler on the independent circuit today. Not only do fans marvel at his talent—they wonder how his body manages to withstand such incredible punishment! So do we!

P is for...

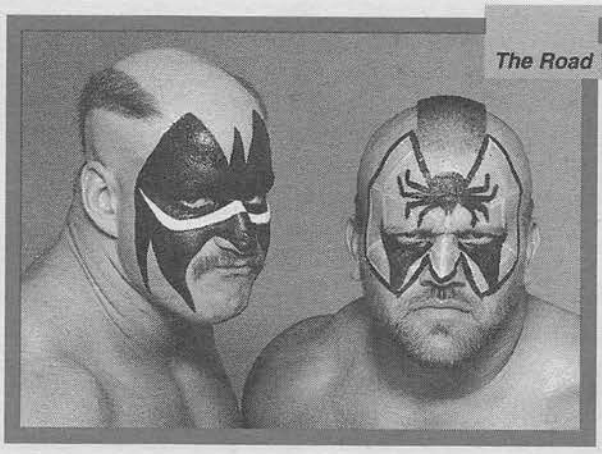
Paint. Face paint, popularized by The Road Warriors, made famous by The Ultimate Warrior, still worn by Sting. Always awesome! The Warriors used face paint to make themselves look more intimidating (as if they couldn't pound opponents without it!); it worked. Ultimate Warrior used it to give himself a futuristic look. And Sting wears face paint because ... well, because he *likes* it!

Parents, as in, "Kids, ask your parents' permission before calling" any 1-900 numbers! These special phone lines have expanded wrestling's information highway—pay-per-viewers can even listen to a live interview or ask questions of a wrestler after a match!—but they've also expanded parents' phone bills. That's why it's so important for kids to ask their parents first. But once you have permission, folks, dial away!

Pay-per-view, the technology that changed wrestling forever. Long before the world ever heard of the Olympics Triplecast or the 25th anniversary of Woodstock, the WWF took the first step toward taking full advantage of PPV TV. It all started with the WWF Wrestling Classic on November 7, 1985. Since then, wrestling has revolutionized PPV—and vice versa.

Piledriver, undoubtedly among the most dangerous maneuvers in wrestling. It's hard to say why piledrivers are legal, considering the damage they cause. And, in fact, they've been banned in several states. But when it's properly executed, it's a brutal and decisive finisher.

Portable telephone, the kind carried by Paul E. Dangerously and often used on opponents. Dangerously's ever-present cellular phone seldom rings (who's he talking to, anyway?), but he never leaves home without it. Dangerously and the telephone. It's like Cornette and his tennis racket.



PAINT
The Road Warriors' is fearsome

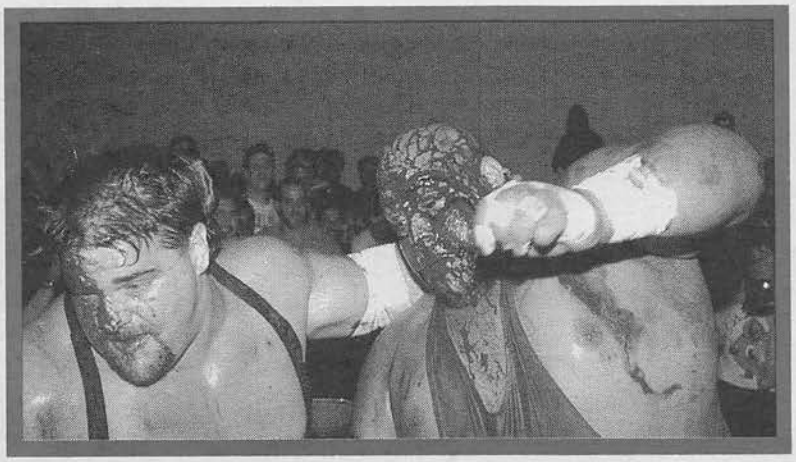


PILEDRIVER
Terry Funk pounds Sabu

Q *is for...*

Quality, as in quality wrestling. There's nothing in the world like first-class wrestling: intense competition, superb athleticism, fan enthusiasm. Promoters work hard to maintain high standards of quality on their cards. They don't always meet those standards, but when they do there's nothing better in the sporting world!

Queasy. Which is how ringside fans sometimes feel when there's too much blood in a match. Arn Anderson's presence makes everyone a little uncomfortable. A sharp blow to the midsection can make a wrestler feel queasy. Bobby "The Brain" Heenan's commentary makes us a little queasy. And Vince McMahon must have been feeling very queasy during his steroid trial.



QUEASY
At the sight of blood

Queen, one of Sherri Martel's many adjectives during her long and controversial managerial career (others include Sensational, Sensuous, and Scary). A question: If Sherri was queen of your land, wouldn't you organize a revolution?

Quip, something wrestling fans regularly expect from Jesse Ventura, Jerry Lawler, Bobby Heenan, Randy Savage, "Mean" Gene Okerlund, and other broadcasters. The best one-liners are to be savored like fine wine. The rest ... well, it's only television!

Quitting. Is it a reason to feel shame? A wrestler who quits in an "I Quit" match has probably absorbed immense amounts of punishment; is it wrong to give up at that point? A champion who takes a walk and quits when he realizes disqualification is the only way to retain his title *should* feel shame. Quitting is often called the coward's way out...but it always requires a closer look.



QUEEN
Sherri (who's now Sensuous)

R is for...

Ratings, and that can mean one of two things: (1) Television ratings, which every wrestling federation hopes to have in abundance (WCW recently scored big numbers with its Hulk Hogan vs. Ric Flair Clash of the Champions event), and (2) Wrestler ratings in the pages of THE WRESTLER and its sister publications, which—if our own experience and research tells us anything—is the first thing most readers turn to when they see a new issue on the stands!

Raw. That's *WWF Monday Night Raw,* of course, the show that has injected a heavy dose of excitement back into televised wrestling. Small arenas, hot crowds, and blistering action all combine to make *Raw* the place where fans who don't have or can't afford pay-per-view get their fix of quality wrestling.

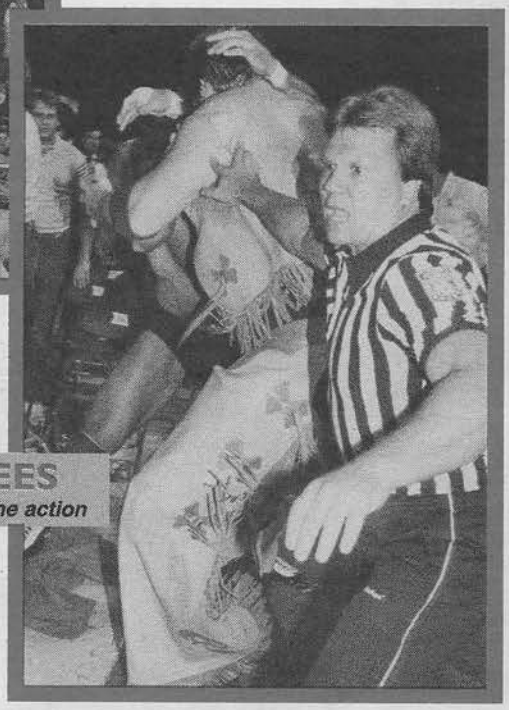
Referees. Don't undervalue them. True, they tend to miss a lot of calls, but the make a lot more than they miss...and they take more than their fair share of lumps and bumps in trying to maintain control over the wildest sport in the world. Our hats go off to wrestling's finest.

Renegades. Wrestling welcomes rebels with open arms, and that's just one more quality about the sport that makes it perpetually exciting and fascinating. Imagine if the squared circle couldn't find a place for the Road Warriors, or Terry Funk, or Eddie Gilbert, or Razor Ramon, or...

Royal Rumble, which has consistently provided some of the greatest thrills on the WWF pay-per-view calendar. Hulk Hogan won it in 1990 and '91, but Ric Flair turned in the greatest Rumble performance ever in '92 by lasting 62:02 to win the event—and the WWF World title!



RAW
Making Monday nights exciting

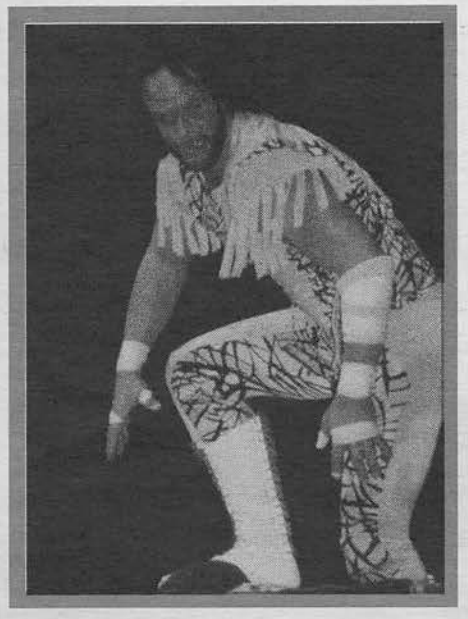


REFEREES
In the thick of the action

S is for...



SAMOA
A bumper crop of grapplers



SAVAGE
Randy certainly is!

Samoa. This group of volcanic islands in the South Pacific, located halfway between Hawaii and Australia, has somehow turned out an enormous number of pro wrestlers, even though its population is under 250,000. Samoan wrestlers include Afa, Fatu, Samu, The Samoan Savage, and two-time former WWF World champion Yokozuna. Must be something in the water!

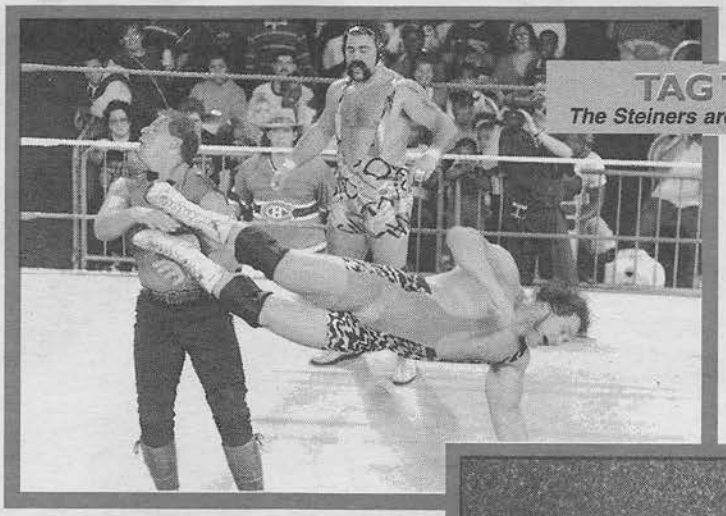
Savage, as in Randy (not Samoan!). Of course, S is also for **S**ting, **S**herri (Martel), **S**abu, (Rick) **S**teamboat, (Tito) **S**antana, (Ron) **S**immons, (Davey Boy) **S**mith, (Rick and Scott) **S**teiner, and (Irwin R.) **S**chyster...among others! More top stars' names begin with S than any other letter. (Sorry, Hulk, Dusty, Bret...)

Sharpshooter. Bret Hart has perfected this move, similar in nature to Sting's "Scorpion deathlock." He once used it to nearly break Jerry Lawler's leg (in fact, Lawler's leg *would* have been broken if WWF officials didn't force Bret to break the hold). The "sharpshooter" recently became the centerpiece in the war between the Harts, as both Bret and Owen claimed they had the best variation. The winner? Bret, legs down!

Sportatorium. The one in Dallas still exists. The ones in Tampa and Hollywood, Florida, are gone. The Dallas Sportatorium is one of the most famous shrines in the sport: This is where the Von Erich brothers rose to worldwide fame in the early 1980s. The Sportatoriums in Tampa and Hollywood (recently demolished by the wrecker's ball) hosted Championship Wrestling from Florida—and stars like Dusty Rhodes, the Funks, the Briscos, Sir Oliver Humperdink and his men, and a very young Lex Luger. When you say Sportatorium, we say wrestling.

Steroids. Ugh! Accusations (spoken and whispered), trials, arguments...it all boils down to one fact: Steroids are bad news, and have been wrestling's albatross for too long. Let's hope the sport can free itself of these drugs' dangerous grasp once and for all.

Tag teams. Back in the '50s, tag team wrestling was as unusual in the sport as, say, a triangle match in the '90s. Today, where would wrestling be without its tandems? The Steiners, The Heavenly Bodies, Public Enemy, The Rock 'n' Roll Express... and let's not forget legendary duos like The Road Warriors, The Midnight Express (all versions!), and...well, you want more about tag teams, go talk to Capt. Lou Albano!



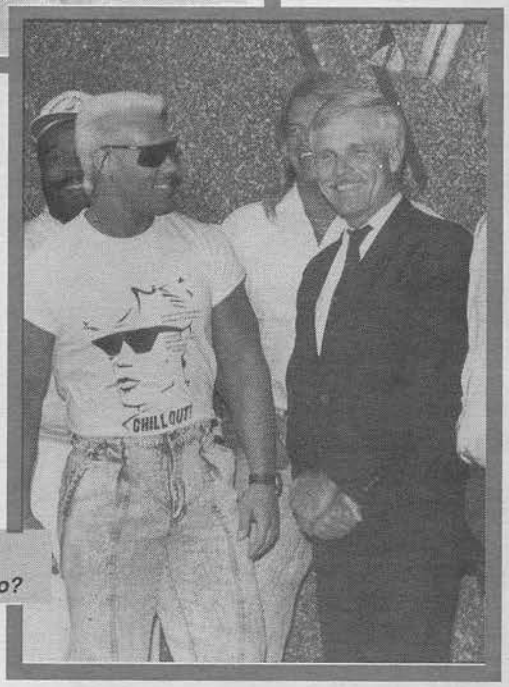
TAG TEAMS
The Steiners are an awesome one!

Tennis, a sport manager Jim Cornette has seldom played, even though he never goes anywhere without a racket. The dead giveaway: Cornette carries an aluminum model, although they became relics nearly 10 years ago! Of course, Cornette isn't worried about sweet spots, overspin, and control. He likes keeping the racket tightly strung so it stings the skull of its intended target. When he wrestles, though, he usually loses in straight sets!

Tights. Colorful, skintight, and aerodynamic, tights can be as much an expression of a wrestler's personality as his interview! Just look at the outrageous tights worn by Rick Rude!

Titles. No, not "Mr. Wonderful" or "WCW Commissioner." We mean championships, gold belts, the stuff that every wrestler is after. More titles can mean more income—and a greater place in the eyes of wrestling history.

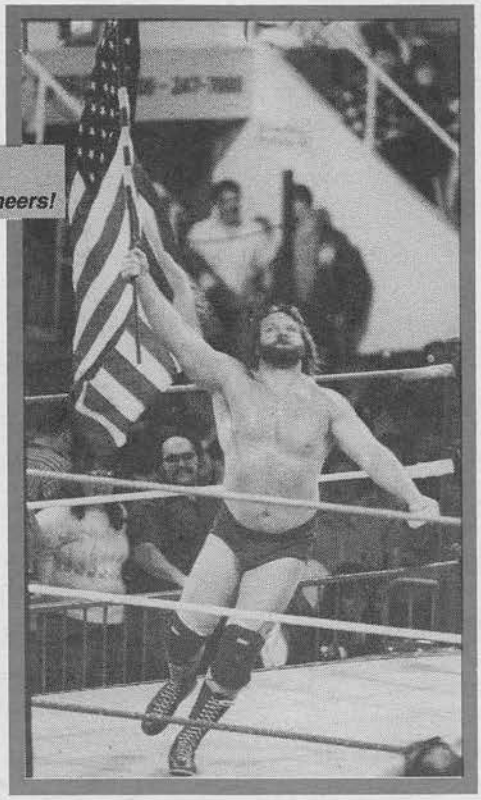
Ted Turner. Interestingly, the multi-millionaire owner of Turner Broadcasting, baseball's Atlanta Braves, and basketball's Atlanta Hawks (among other things!) credits pro wrestling with much of his success. It was *Georgia Championship Wrestling* that gave Turner his first consistently big ratings when TBS became a national SuperStation... and the rest is broadcasting history!



TED TURNER
Is Jane fond o' wrestling, too?

T is for...

U is for...



"U.S.A.!"
Hacksaw Duggan always hears those cheers!



UNDERTAKER
Enigmatic and enthralling!

The good Undertaker, the one under Paul Bearer's care, wanted to rest in peace. The Evil Undertaker, the one bought by Ted DiBiase, wouldn't let him...but is now resting (uncomfortably, we presume) back wherever he came from. Still, the fascination with Undertaker, who has alternately captivated and terrorized wrestlers and wrestling fans with his bizarre mystique, continues. (So what's in that urn, anyway?!)

"U.S.A.!" It's a chant that invariably arises whenever Hacksaw Duggan steps into the ring, or when an opponent needs a boost against American-basher Lord Steven Regal. Wrestling fans may be bloodthirsty at times, but don't ever suggest they don't love their country!

Unknown. As in Parts Unknown, the impossible home of virtually every masked wrestler or grappler with a marginal grip on reality (The Moondogs and Missing Link, for example). We can't help but wonder: What's Halloween like in Parts Unknown?

Unquestionably. *Unquestionably* is unquestionably the word that should unquestionably be dropped from Vince McMahon's broadcasting vocabulary. Is it annoying to hear it uttered so often in such stentorian tones? Unquestionably!

U-turn. As in going from rulebreaker to fan favorite, or vice versa. Bob Backlund recently made a completely unexpected U-turn and became a rulebreaker for the first time in his life. It seems every wrestler has at least a few U-turns in him...except for Rick Steamboat, who's *never* strayed from the straight lane of the rulebook.

is for...

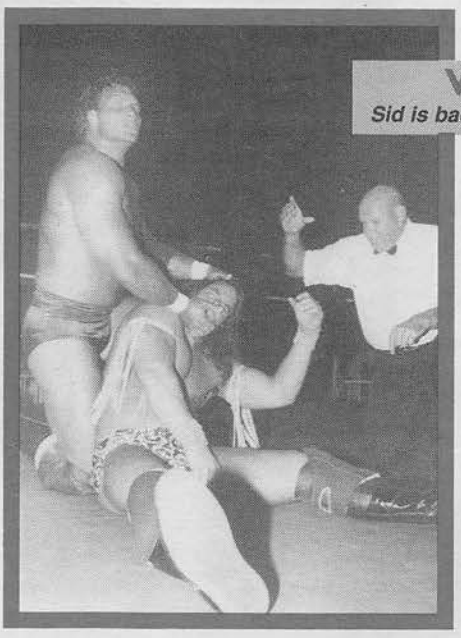
Vachons, one of Canada's greatest wrestling families. There was Mad Dog Vachon, Paul "The Butcher" Vachon, and the great Vivian Vachon. The latest Vachon is Luna, and she's even crazier (and more violent) than the rest of her clan! Luna bites, kicks, scratches, claws, and attacks with a ferocity that is seldom seen, even in wrestling! Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned—especially a crazed one!

Vengeance. The search for vengeance is at the heart of just about every feud: Bunkhouse Buck seeks vengeance against Dustin and Dusty Rhodes for an apparent slight; Dustin seeks vengeance against Arn Anderson for a sneak-attack; Crush had vengeance in mind when he returned from an injury and went after Randy Savage; and on and on and on. Love makes the world go 'round, but vengeance is mine, sayeth the wrestling ring!

Vicious. Sid is back and looking to make up for lost time! He recently won the USWA heavyweight title, and reportedly has his sights set on bigger things. Although something always seems to stop him—last year, it was a fight with Arn Anderson in a London hotel room—Sid has vowed to reach the top. He certainly has world championship ability. Unfortunately, he also has a rookie's inability to remain focused on his goals.

Violence. Wrestling without violence would be like football without tackling, like hockey without hard checking. Some people say wrestling is too violent. We say they should simply change the channel.

Von Erich and the incredible story of wrestling's greatest tragedy. Fritz and Doris have painfully seen the deaths of five sons: Jack, David, Mike, Chris, and Kerry. It's tested their faith, and it's broken their marriage. Kevin lives on, but he carries on his shoulders a burden that no man should have to bear. The surviving family has all our sympathy and prayers...and then some.

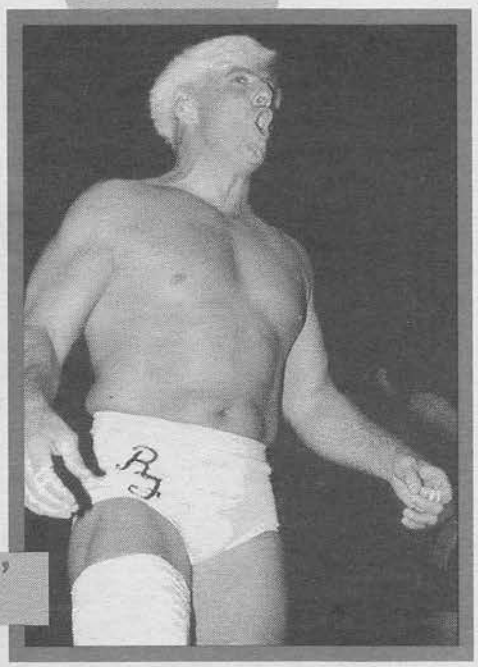


VICIOUS
Sid is back (but for how long?)

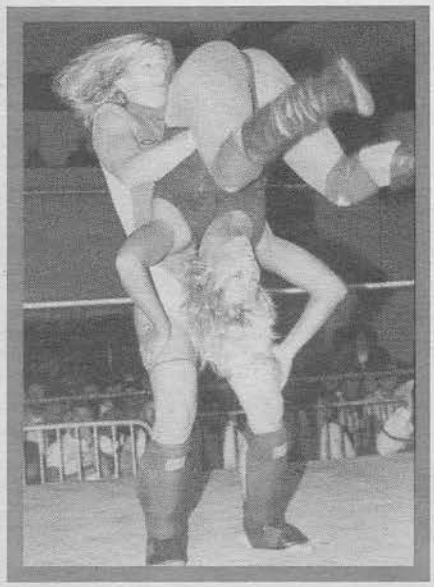


VON ERICHS
A family of tragedy

W *is for...*



"WHOOOOOO!"
Ric Flair in control!



WOMEN
Alundra Blayze vs. Luna Vachon

Weasel. Not only is Bobby Heenan one of the best managers ever, he's also a great TV analyst. Heenan's sharp wit, combined with his inability to back up his words with action, have earned him the "Weasel" nickname. Heenan doesn't seem to care, though: He just keeps talking and saying outrageous things. Heenan may have enemies all over the world, but he also has countless fans who can't wait for the next hilarious thing he'll say.

"Whoooooo!" It's Ric Flair's signature statement, a symbol of one of wrestling's most charismatic personalities. You can't picture Flair without his "Whoooooo!" any more than you could imagine Ozzie Smith without his backflips. Fans of the "Nature Boy" have enjoyed hearing him say it for years—as much as they enjoy "Whooooooing" back at him!

Why? Superstar Graham tore apart Bob Backlund's WWF World title belt and Backlund screamed, "Why?" Backlund recently turned rulebreaker, and now we ask the same thing.

Women. Alundra Blayze, Debbie Combs, Leilani Kai, Sherri Martel, Fabulous Moolah, Bull Nakano, Wendi Richter, Luna Vachon ... from the towering Lady Maxine to the midget Baby Cheryl, women have graced the squared circle with beauty and skills. But never say there's a soft side to the women's game: They're just as tough as the men!

WrestleMania, 10 years young and still going strong! In 1994, the WWF proved it could hold a WrestleMania without Hulk Hogan, as Bret Hart won the World title from Yokozuna and Owen Hart took on—and beat—his older brother earlier on the card. It just goes to show the event is bigger than any one man, just like the Super Bowl is bigger than any one team. The WWF just never had the chance to prove it until 1994.

Xenophobia. It means a fear or hatred of anything foreign or strange, and it's been the impetus for dozens of feuds over the years. Just ask Hacksaw Duggan or Sgt. Slaughter. Of course, every wrestler suffers from xenophobia to some degree or another: fear of "foreign" objects, even if they're made domestically!

Yokozuna, who is certainly no yahoo when it comes to saying "yes" to winning the WWF World title. Yet we can't help but say "yecch!" and "yuck!" when we see those yard-wide thighs. How about you?

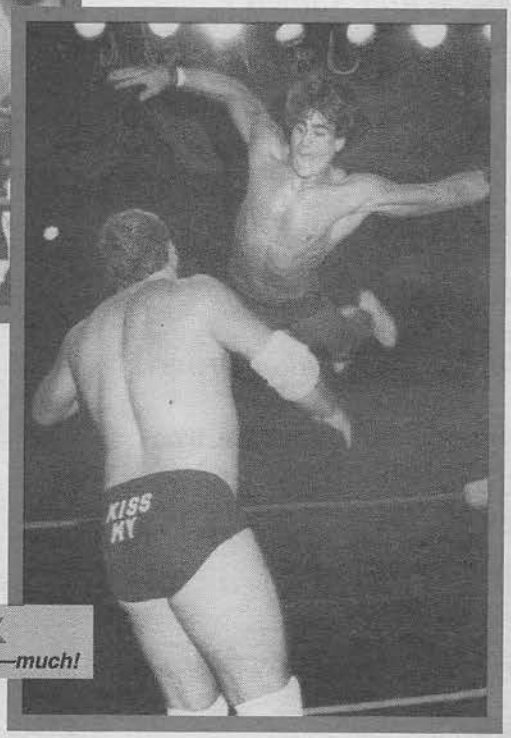


YOKOZUNA
Yecch!

Zbyszko. Larry Zbyszko (no relation to Stanislaus), the self-proclaimed "New Living Legend" and once Bruno Sammartino's greatest protege—and fiercest rival. Current fans know him better for his 1994 comeback, during which he gave pompous Briton Lord Steven Regal something to think about by upsetting him for WCW's TV title. Regal won it back, but Zbyszko had made his point. There's life in the "Living Legend" yet!

Zenk. Tom has had some success in WCW, and is a very capable scientific wrestler, but would he be listed in this directory had his last name started with the more common "S" or "P"? You know the answer, and chances are "Z-Man" knows it, too. Nevertheless, he's far more worthy of a salute than Zeus, Tiny Lister's mat pseudonym, who was to wrestling what some claim Hulk Hogan is to acting!

Zoo. Which is what the WWF looked like not too long ago, what with Davey Boy Smith's bulldog and Jake Roberts' snake and Koko B. Ware's bird all on hand. And by the way, whatever happened to the Steiners' pet dog, Arnold?

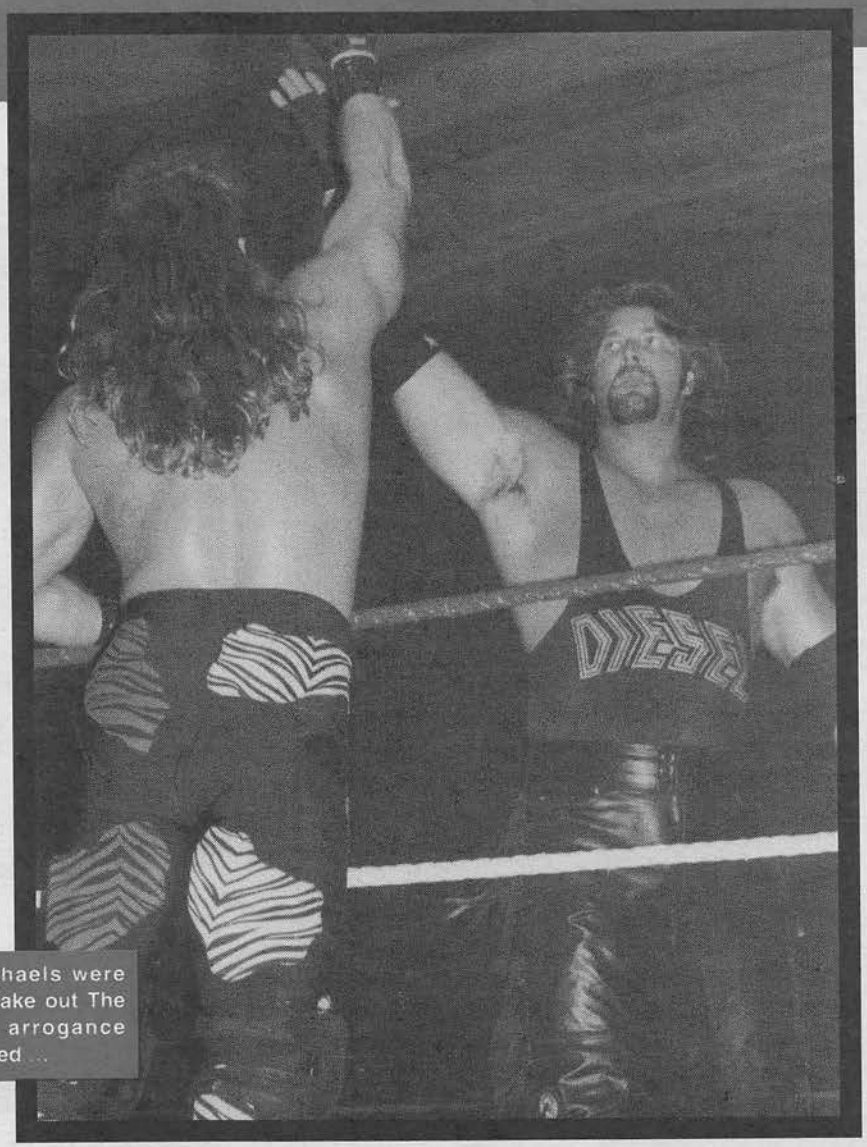


ZENK
Better than Zeus—much!

X Y Z *are for...*

FROM HIGH

Diesel and Shawn Michaels had become arrogant, convinced no one in the WWF could defeat their combined force. Undertaker proved otherwise. When he was through, Michaels and Diesel looked like a couple of losers—and worse



Diesel and Shawn Michaels were confident Diesel would take out The Undertaker, but their arrogance turned out to be unfounded ...

By Andy Rodriguez

SHAWN MICHAELS AND Diesel are both former WWF Intercontinental champions. Quick conclusion:

Their attitudes stink, but their credentials are impressive.

Since Michaels asked Diesel to be his bodyguard, the two have been a very impressive duo. They break the rules quite effectively. They do what they have to do to win, and for them, that is what counts.

That impresses a lot of people, fan favorites as well as rulebreakers. Many of those people hate Michaels and Diesel, some despise them passionately. They think Michaels is the personification of arrogance, with

FIVE

Diesel a close second.

Along with that hatred, however, comes fear and respect. They are loath to face the dastardly duo in the ring, because they know—many of them firsthand—how dangerous the twosome can be.

Yet not everyone is afraid. Not everyone believes Michaels and Diesel are to be avoided no matter what.

One man in the WWF even welcomes the dangers they pose. He spits in their faces, and dares them to step through the ropes.

That man is The Undertaker.

This is not the Undertaker who Ted DiBiase brought to the WWF, but the real deal. The man who entered the federation as one of its most virulent rulebreakers but now stands as one of its most ardent defenders of fan favorites.

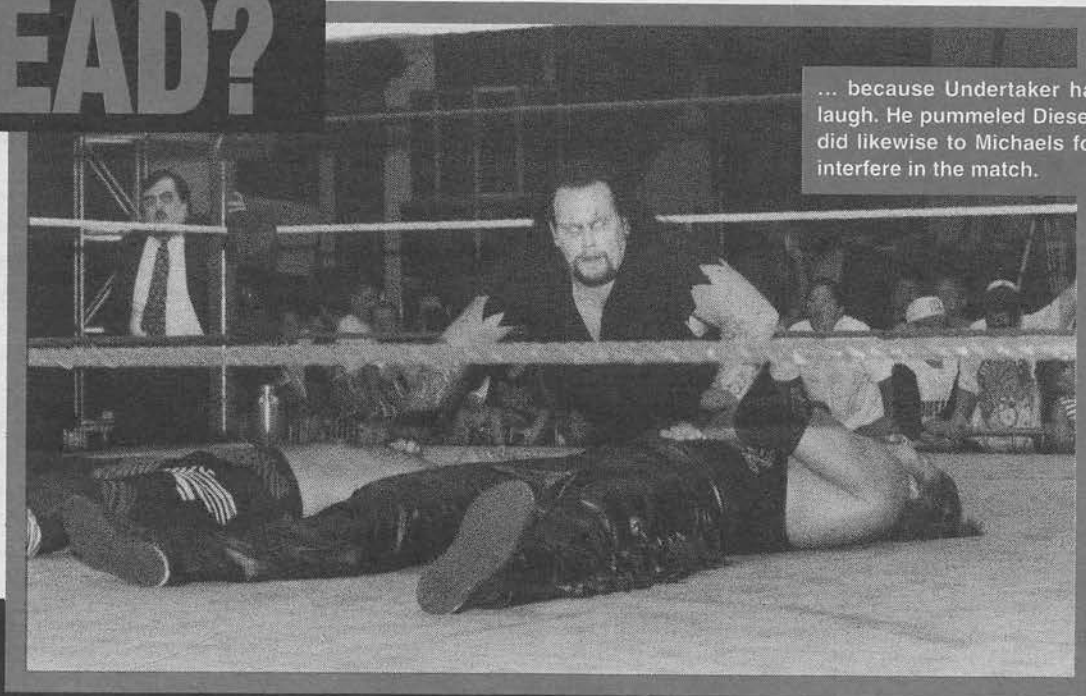
Michaels and Diesel are his latest targets. He doesn't think much of them or their abilities. He is quietly confident he can overcome anything they may think to throw at him.

"Undertaker not only despises what they stand for," said one associate, "he totally disrespects them as wrestlers and athletes. It's common for a guy to hate you but respect your ability. That doesn't hold here. Undertaker thinks Michaels and Diesel are two of the most overrated guys in the sport, Intercontinental titles or not."

When Michaels and Diesel heard of Undertaker's strong views, they expressed their own feelings of contempt.

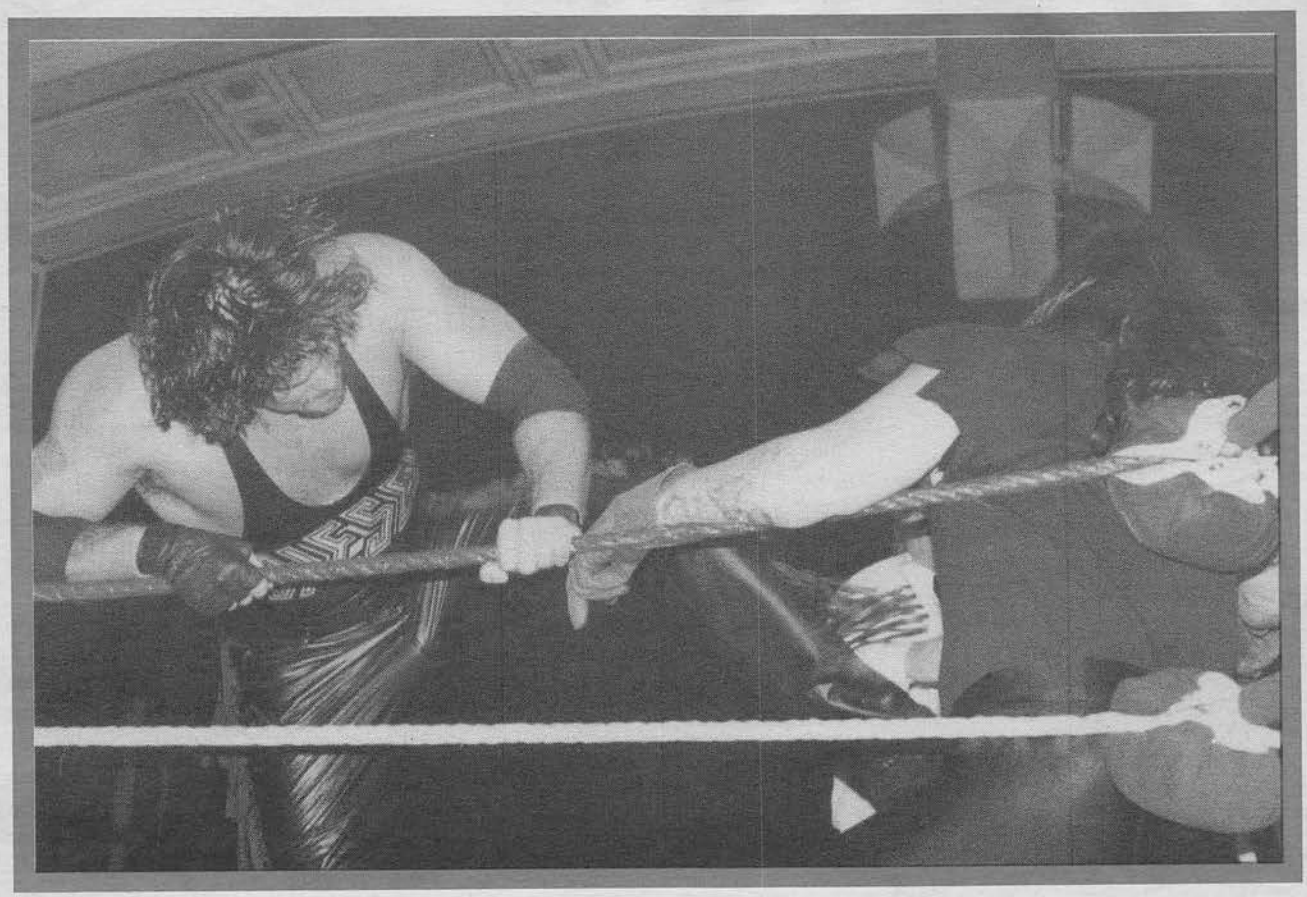
"Shawn and Diesel are riding high," said manager Jim Cornette, a good friend of both. "They've shown everybody in this federation what they're made of. They don't need this clown Undertaker to go trashing them left and right. Heck, he calls them overrated, but he's the one who high-

ARE THEY... DEAD?



... because Undertaker had the last laugh. He pummeled Diesel, and then did likewise to Michaels for trying to interfere in the match.

TO DEEP SIX



Diesel is one of the few wrestlers who is bigger and stronger than Undertaker. The seven-footer gave Undertaker a good battle for several minutes, but that didn't last long.

tailed it out of the WWF when things got too hot for him. If he had an ounce of sense, he'd take off again before Shawn and Diesel show him why they're such great champions."

That is typical Cornette bluster, but the words do sum up Michaels and Diesel's opinion of Undertaker. By the night of the match, they were convinced they could not lose. Of course Undertaker also felt that, for him, victory was inevitable. How to solve this difference of opinion? Go to the ring.

Diesel was accompanied, of course, by Michaels, while Undertaker was led to the ring by his manager, Paul Bearer. So confident were Diesel and his second that they high-fived each other and laughed, as though they hardly faced a challenge. They wanted to show Undertaker they absolutely were not afraid of him. It was their way of saying they wouldn't be intimidated.

Undertaker's attempt at intimidation was pretty scary. It was an icy glare that made a lot of spectators feel they should be wearing their overcoats, even though it was August.

At the outset, it was a good match. The big guys traded powerful blows and dangerous maneuvers while Bearer and Michaels offered their advice and encouragement from the safety of the arena floor. For a time it appeared as though neither Michaels nor Bearer had any intention of getting involved. That's how it appeared anyway.

Of course Michaels, ever arrogant, could not resist attempting to aid his comrade. His efforts pulled Bearer into the fray. Soon the match was no longer a match, but a melee—which is what Michaels and Diesel wanted. In their warped minds, a loss by disqualification may as well be a win.

Michaels and Diesel did lose by DQ. But there was no victory here.

First, Undertaker focused his intensity on Diesel. The seven-foot titleholder is a powerhouse, but Undertaker manhandled him. The man who embraces death may as well have been wrestling Bearer. Then the

man from the great beyond made Michaels pay dearly for his decision to interfere. He pummeled him mercilessly, leaving the former champion bruised, battered, and thoroughly beaten.

As Undertaker left the ring to the fans' roar, Michaels and Diesel lay in the center of the ring, defeated and humiliated. They didn't look unbeatable. They didn't look like champions. The swagger was gone.

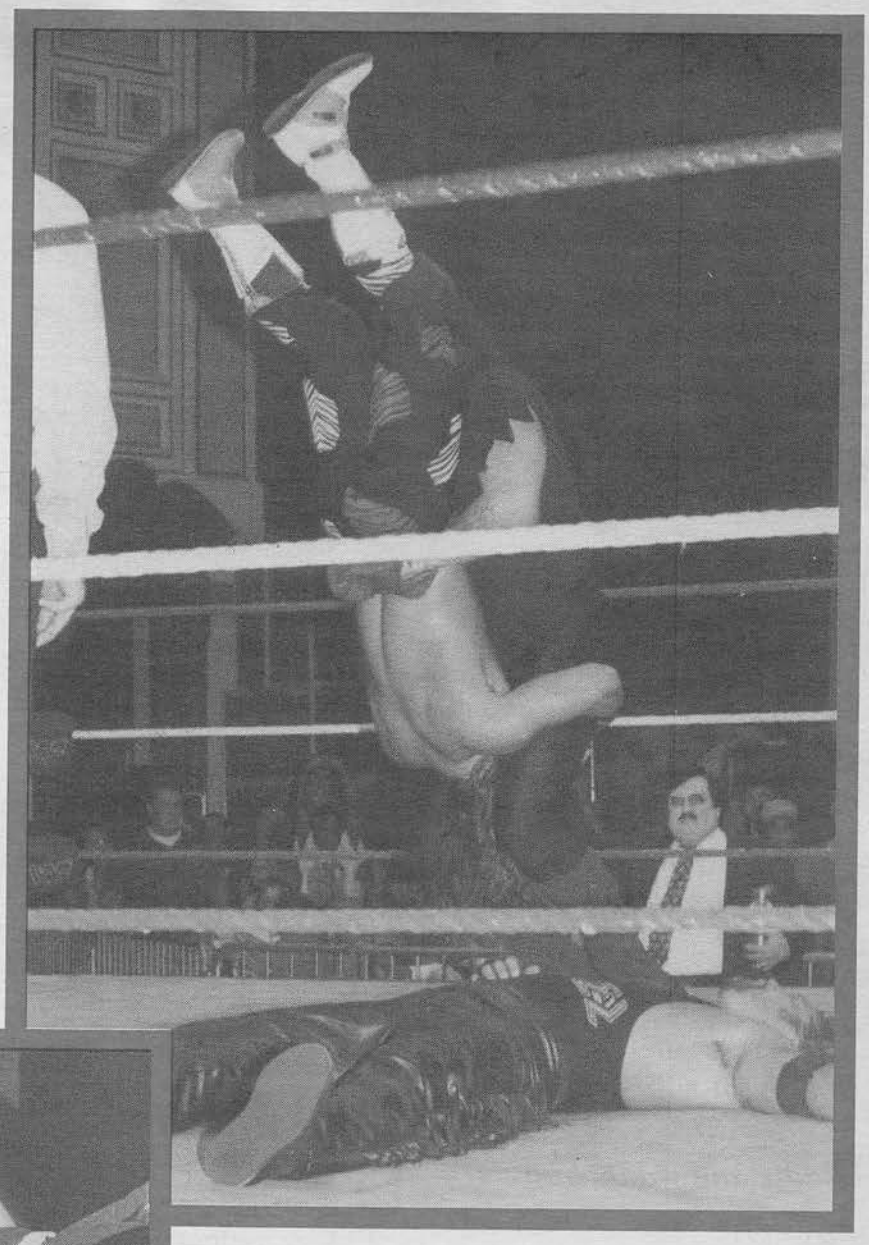
Michaels and Diesel still pose a formidable threat, but after what Undertaker did to them, they no longer are feared.

"After that match, many guys saw that Michaels and Diesel aren't so tough after all," said Capt. Lou Albano, an interested onlooker. "A lot fewer people will be afraid to challenge Diesel."

If Diesel goes down, he very likely will take Michaels with him. This may be a good time for Michaels to start worrying about his own career again.

That's probably what he's doing already. Michaels is a survivor.

Even at Diesel's expense. □



However, Michaels was no match for the behemoth from the great beyond. After Undertaker took care of Diesel, he used a tombstone piledriver on Michaels, much to Paul Bearer's glee.



Undertaker gradually took control, and Diesel found himself running out of gas. Fortunately for him, Michaels entered, attempting to interfere.

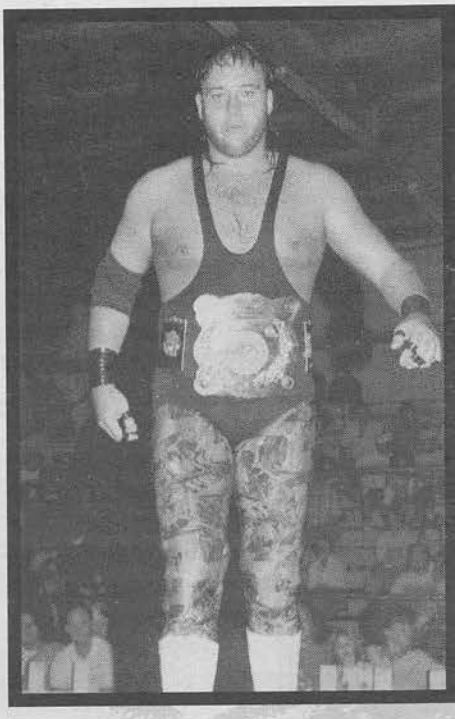
Doug Gilbert's Stunning Confession

I PLACED A BOUNTY ON MY BROTHER'S

Photos by
Steve Beyer and Scott George

Doug Gilbert has grown tired of sharing the limelight with brother Eddie and wants him out of the way, at any price. Or does he? This is one feud in which the two combatants could truly become blood brothers!

By Chris Bernucca



DOUG GILBERT SAYS he isn't a movie buff.

If he was, perhaps that would lend some credence to his recent actions. If Gilbert had seen *State Of Grace*, he could draw a correlation between himself and Ed Harris, who as the head of an Irish crime family has no choice but to kill his renegade younger brother, played by Gary Oldman. If Gilbert had seen *New Jack City*, he could sympathize with Wesley Snipes, who takes out his sibling because he knows too much and because he questions his level of loyalty. And surely he has seen *The Godfather*, where Al Pacino orders a hit on a distrusting brother-in-law, thus making his sister a widow.

"This ain't the movies," Gilbert

snapped when confronted with these film snippets. "This is real life. And I'm tired of my brother getting in the way of my life. Everywhere I go, it's 'Eddie this' and 'Eddie that.' I've had enough of it. I'm Doug Gilbert, not Eddie Gilbert's brother."

Doug's anger is simmering, and with good reason. For his entire career in the wrestling ring, he has lived in the shadow of his brother, Eddie Gilbert, who has always been more charismatic and more successful. Whatever success Doug Gilbert has earned in his career has usually come at the side of his brother.

But recently, Doug has begun to carve his own niche, defeating Brian Christopher to win the USWA Southern title. In the past, Doug had heard the comparisons to his brother following narrow title losses or tag team victories. Eddie had always gotten the credit, but this time, all the credit would go to the man who had actually won the title: Doug Gilbert.

Or so he thought. The comparisons to his brother continued to follow him like a shadow. Skeptics pointed out that Eddie had held the USWA heavyweight title on several occasions. Even in victory, Doug was still being compared to his brother—and falling short.

Doug knew just one way to escape the shadow of his brother's success. He had to eliminate the shadow, so the spotlight would fall directly on him.

"I placed a bounty on my brother's head!" Doug revealed when pressed by a reporter. The rumors of such had been running rampant in the USWA for quite some time. How much was it? How badly did Doug want to hurt Eddie? Did he want him eliminated entirely? "You're the reporter," Doug sneered. "You figure it out."

One thing was certain—there were plenty of men who felt they were up to the task. Other USWA wrestlers were licking their lips at the prospects of getting paid for taking out Eddie, who has spent his career making enemies in just about every federation where he has wrestled.

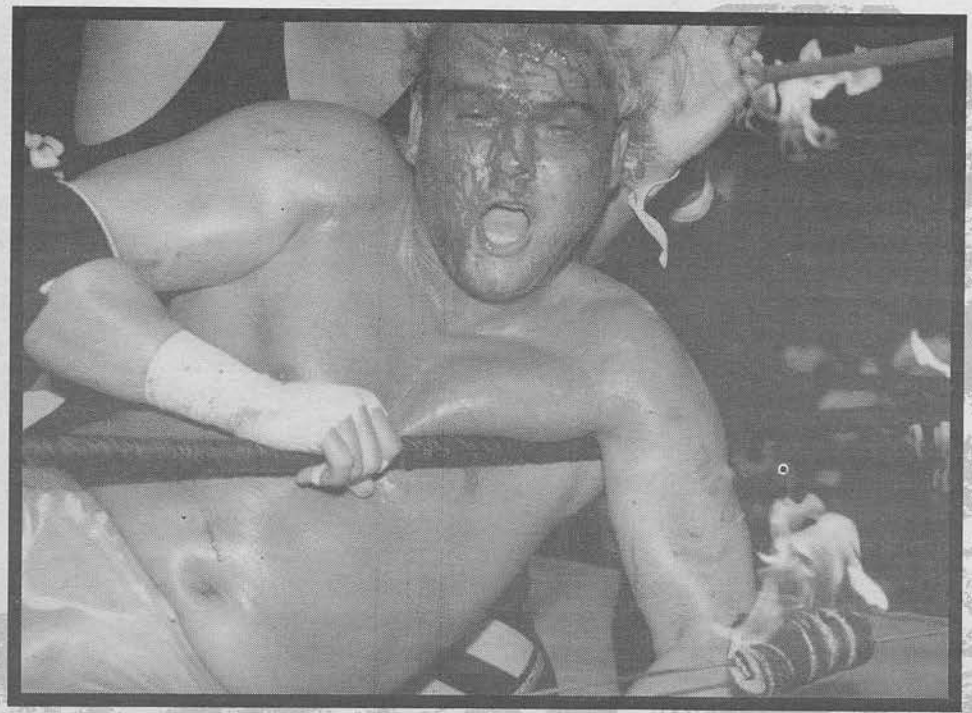
"Paying me to hurt Eddie Gilbert?" wondered one USWA fan favorite who only discussed his feelings on the condition of anonymity. "Heck, I'd do that for free. But Doug is promising a lot of money, so maybe after I collect, I'll take a nice, long vacation."

When word of the bounty became public, it didn't take long for it to reach its target. For a change, Eddie was not shadowing his brother. He

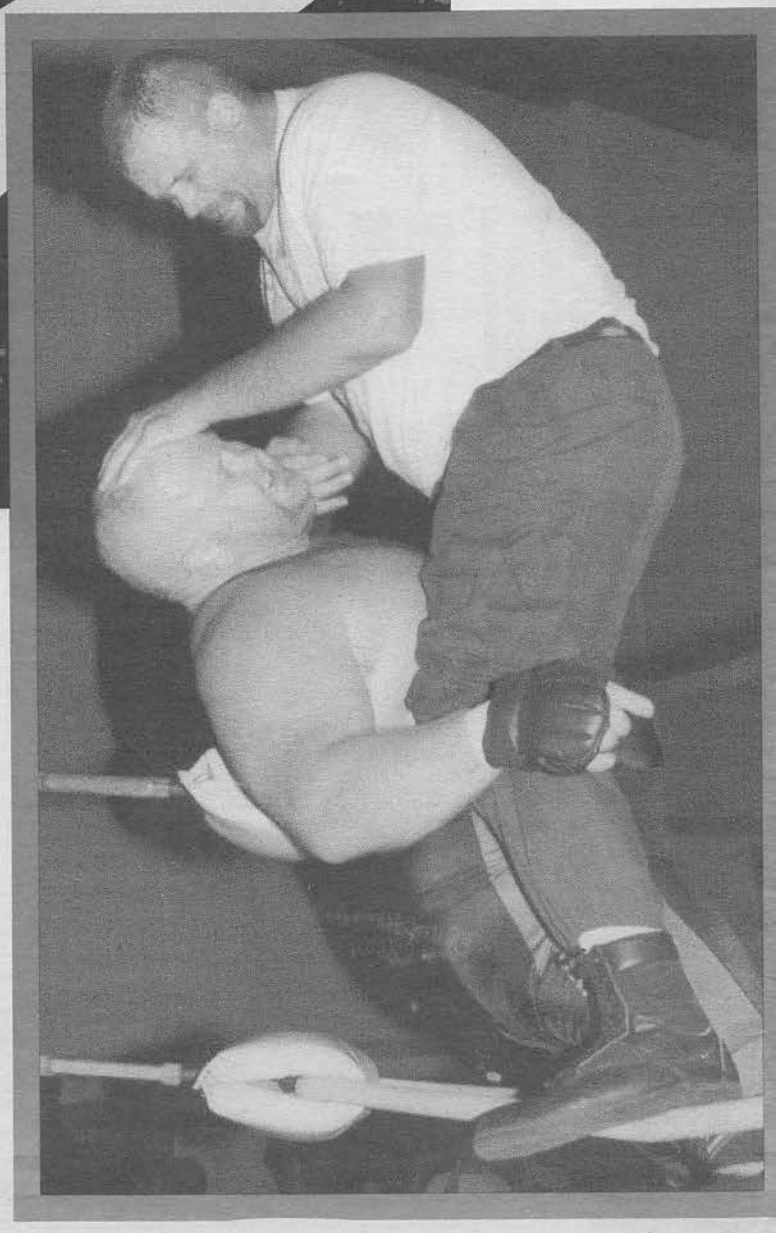
(Continued on page 78)

HEAD!"

Doug Gilbert (opposite page) decided the only way he could get out of older brother Eddie's shadow was to do away with Eddie (below). He has actually gone so far as to offer a reward for his brother's ouster from the mat sport.



VADER'S HEAVENLY PLAN TO SEND HULK HOGAN TO HELL!



The Guardian Angel stands between Big Van Vader and a shot at WCW World champion Hulk Hogan. To get there, Vader must send Angel to the heavens and show Hogan and the rest of WCW that he is back!

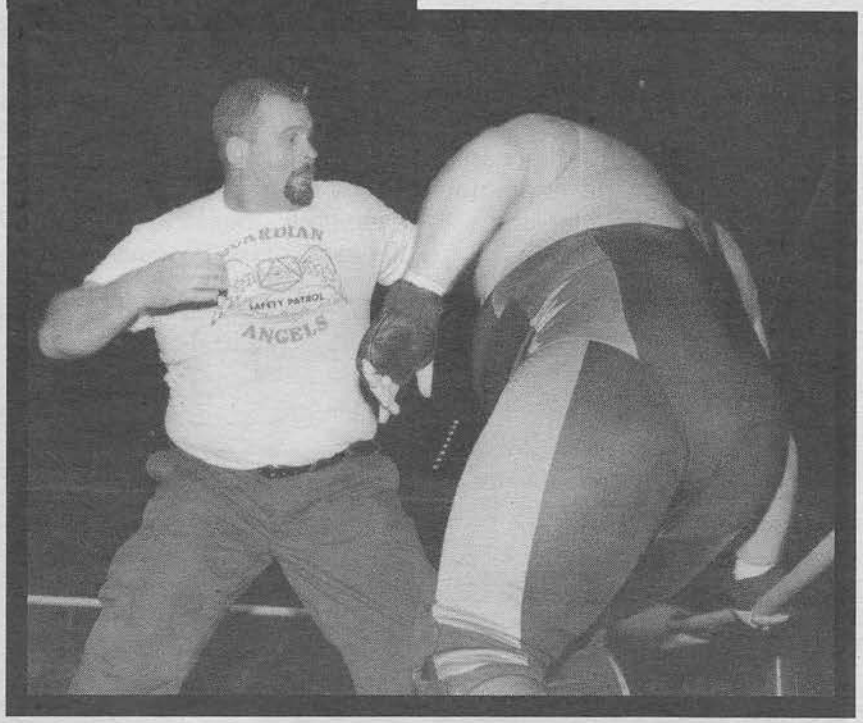
By Chris Bernucca

BIG VAN VADER hasn't exactly had the year he was anticipating, but the year isn't over yet.

After holding the WCW World title for nearly all of 1993, Vader was expecting another year atop the federation. But a funny thing happened on the way to total dominance. Vader was upset by Ric Flair in the final few days of 1993, losing the belt. He failed to regain it in a rematch and has been reduced to the role of second banana.

During 1993, Vader was one of the best wrestlers on the planet. He still does well overseas, as his recent UWFI title in Japan demonstrates. But domestically in 1994, he's dropped out of the WCW title picture as Flair and current champion Hulk Hogan continue their battle. No end is in sight.

At first, Vader wanted to get at Angel to gain revenge for his actions as special referee during Vader's title match with Ric Flair. Hogan has since won the belt, and Vader now finds himself mired in a protracted feud.



Big Van Vader is going through hell, courtesy of The Guardian Angel (opposite page). Vader knows that to get a WCW title match against Hulk Hogan, he'll have to beat Angel, and so far he's been unable to do so.

"It's kind of unfair," WCW expert Donald Wayne said. "You could make the case that Vader was the best wrestler in the world in 1993. But with the loss of his title and the emergence of Flair and Hogan, he's now down a notch, which has to bother him."

Vader has spent most of this year feuding with The Guardian Angel, whom he feels cost him the title in his rematch with Flair at Super Brawl IV. At the time, Angel was known as The Boss and was appointed special referee for the rematch. His actions and subsequent ruling allowed Flair to escape with the title intact.

"He screwed us," said Harley Race, Vader's manager. "We would have won the title that night and we'd still have it right now if it wasn't for that fool."

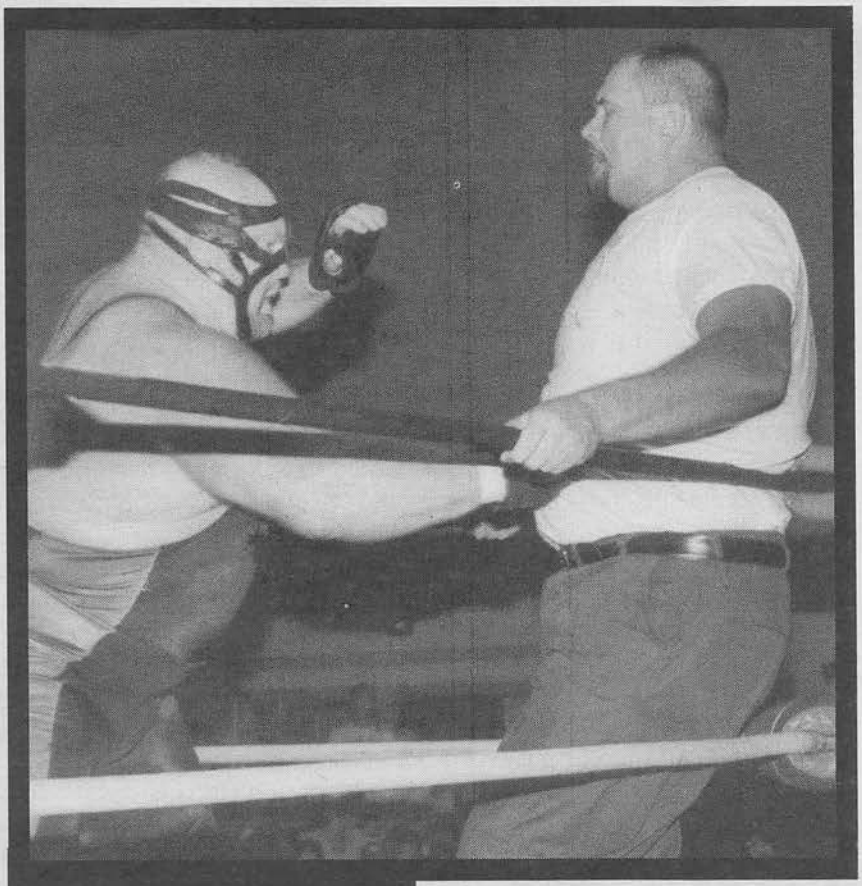
Seven months later, Angel is still blocking Vader's path to the title. "That fool" is holding his own in a protracted feud with Vader, preventing the Colorado behemoth from making another run at the title.

Vader and Race know that they can't get a shot at Hogan's title without first disposing of Angel, and that is their plan. The two have created an all-out offensive assault that will embarrass Angel and again make Vader the federation's most feared wrestler.

"That's not the only way, but it is the best way," Race said, revealing very little about the plan. "We will destroy this idiot in a way that all of WCW will have no choice but to take notice of us. That will put us back in the middle of the action. Hogan will have no choice. He'll have to face us, whether he wants to or not."

Vader's brute force, which has sidelined opponents ranging from former World champion Sting to preliminary wrestler Joe Thurman, is what thrust him into the title picture in the first place. When asked if the plan included the possibility of seriously injuring Angel, Race just smiled.

Vader yearns for a shot at Hogan, whom he feels is very beatable. Besides the obvious physical advantages he holds over Hogan—and every other wrestler



Vader's gift for brutalizing foes hasn't yet materialized in his feud with Angel. And unless he can soon do to Angel what he has done to Cactus Jack and so many others, Vader may be unable to secure a title bout with Hogan.

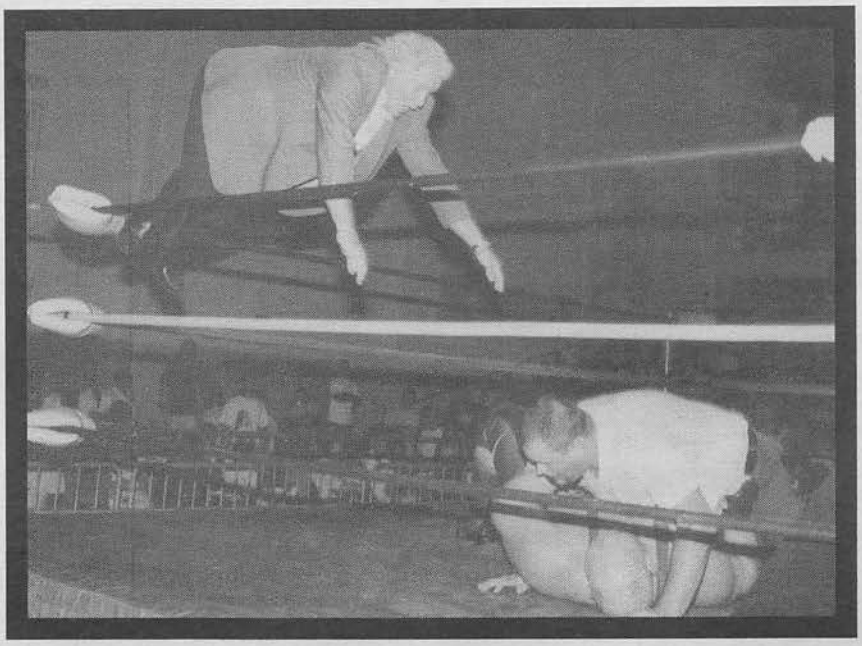
in WCW, for that matter—Vader also believes he has a psychological edge over the "Hulkster." The whispers from Hogan's camp make clear that the champion wants no part of Vader and will avoid him at all costs.

But right now, Hogan doesn't have to worry about beating Vader, because Angel is doing it for him. Vader's frustration seems to grow with every match, which probably led to Race pulling back to refocus his man. Simple logic dictates that if Vader cannot beat Angel, then he is not entitled to a championship bout with Hogan.

No one is more aware of this than Jimmy Hart, Hogan's manager. "We're the champs right now, baby," he said. "That means we get to call the shots. Why should we give a title shot to Vader? In our minds, we won't even consider him as an opponent until he proves himself to us.

"Ric Flair was the champion when we got here. He beat Vader twice. Now we've beaten Flair, while Vader can't beat Guardian Angel. You tell me the logic that says Vader should get a title shot, baby. I'm listening."

Hogan and Hart also have a tremendous hole card that acts as a buffer between themselves and Vader. While winning five titles during his nine years of dominance in the WWF, Hogan beat everybody, including a fellow by the name of Big Bossman.

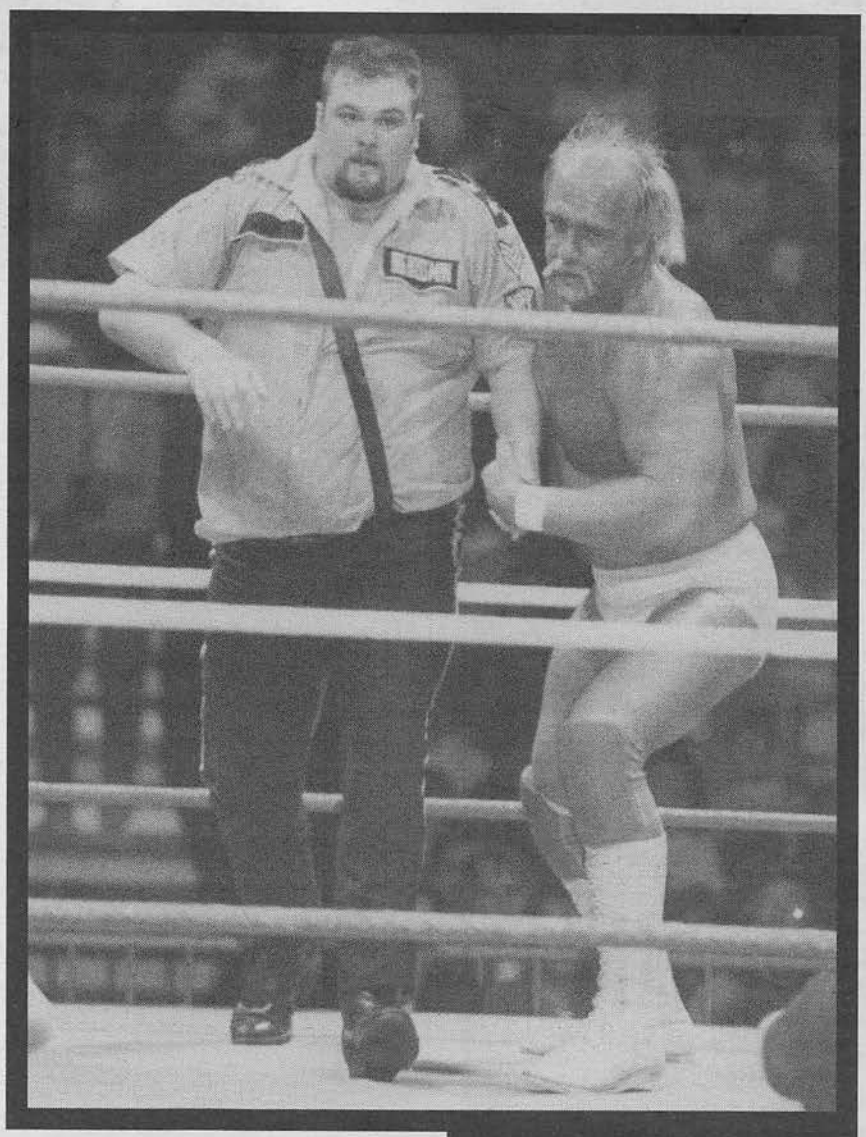


Hogan believes Vader would prove very little in beating Angel. Should Vader get past Angel, Hogan and Hart would probably use Flair as the same type of buffer, claiming that Vader has to beat the "Nature Boy" before receiving a title shot.

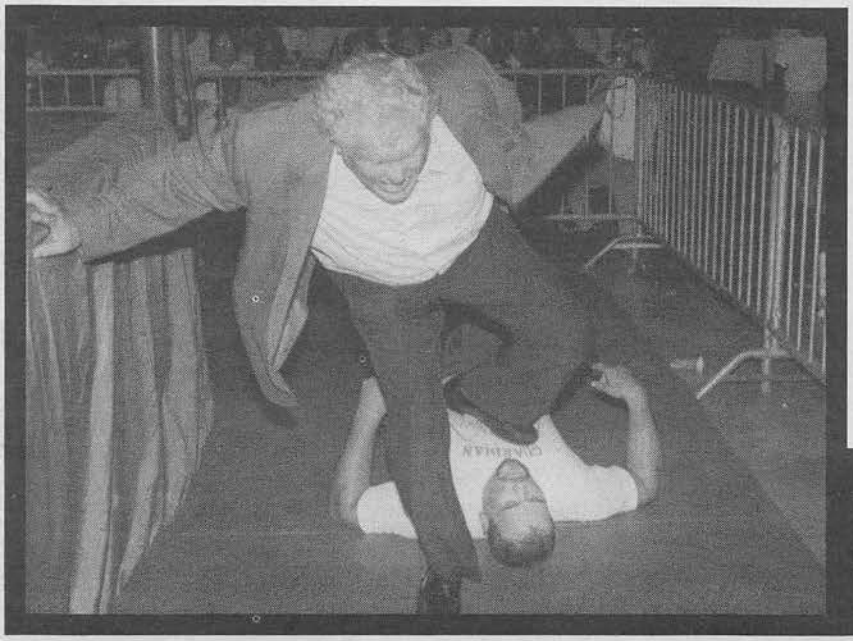
But what if Vader destroys Angel? What if he leaves him in a heap in the middle of the ring, carried out on a stretcher with career-threatening injuries? Regardless of the World title picture, Vader would again become the talk of the federation, picking up valuable air time that would thrust his name to the forefront of title contenders.

Race would use the increase in interviews with Gene Okerlund and Bobby Heenan to make his case for a title shot, which the fans may also want to see. After all, isn't that how Hogan angled his way into a match with Flair?

It's a long shot, but Vader is a long way from a title match against Hogan right now. He has played the waiting game for most of 1994 and his virtues have never included patience. Putting Guardian Angel out of commission might be enough to put himself in the ring against Hogan. □



As WWF World champion, Hogan was able to dominate Big Bossman. Now, perhaps unwittingly, the same man is doing Hogan a tremendous favor.



Harley Race usually doesn't have to interfere this flagrantly in Vader's matches (opposite page). But Angel has so frustrated Vader that Race has no choice to prevent his man's career from taking a tumble (left).

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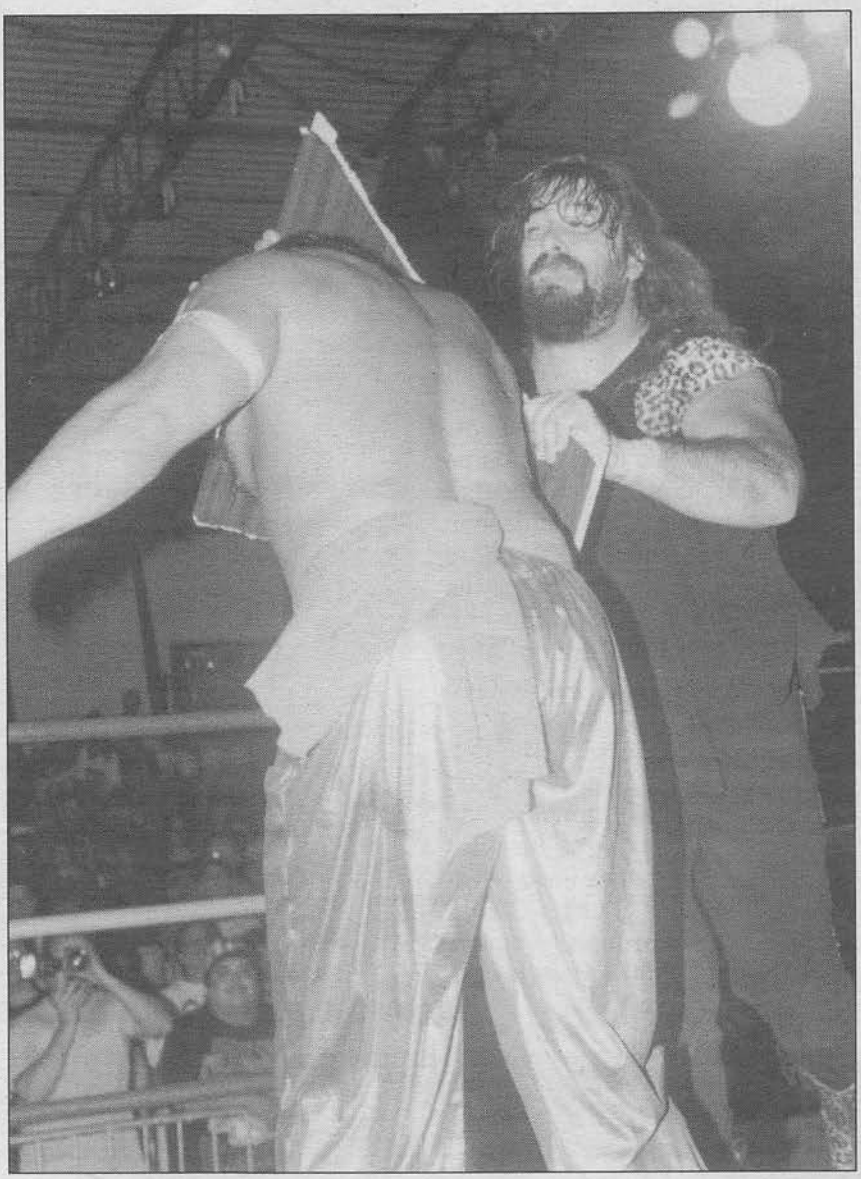
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YOUR LETTERS

(Continued from page 5)



Leaving WCW for good would be a wise move for Cactus Jack, according to reader Nick Brant. He says officials in that federation don't appreciate Jack's intensity and dedication to wrestling.

Whenever I've watched Jack compete in WCW, whether live or on television, I feel secure knowing he's going to give it his all every match—no matter what it costs him. That's a philosophy every wrestler should have, whether he be a fan favorite or a rulebreaker. If all members of WCW's roster shared Jack's dedication to wrestling, the federation would never have needed to shell out all that money to sign Hulk Hogan.

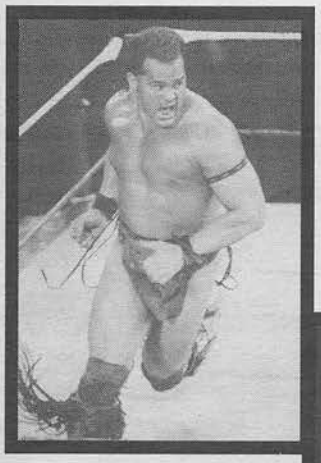
If Jack is smart, he'll say goodbye to WCW once and for all and join independents such as ECW and Smoky Mountain, where fans appreciate a devil-may-care attitude. Cactus, this fan is in your corner!

NICK BRANT
Meridian, MS

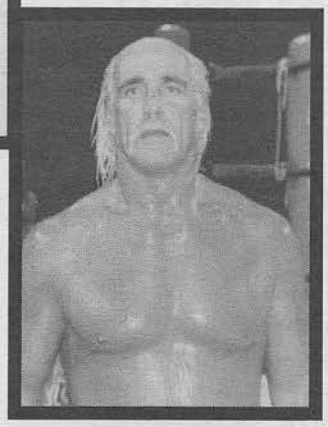
(Continued on page 68)

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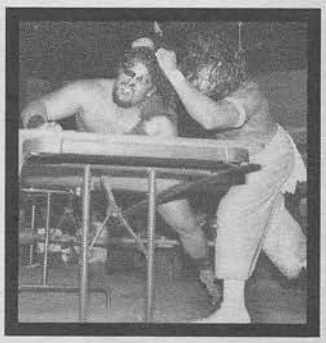
All this—and much more!—in the January 1995 issue of ***Pro Wrestling Illustrated***

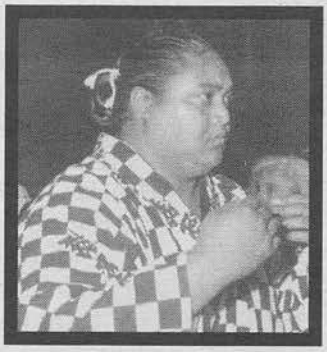
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YOUR LETTERS

(Continued from page 66)

NO WIN, OWEN!

Bret Hart and Owen Hart now fighting on level ground? ("WWF King Or WWF Champ: Which Hart Beats Stronger?", November 1994) Sorry, Dave Rosenbaum, but you're dead wrong. Owen's a good wrestler, and proved it by beating three decent opponents at King of the Ring. But at the same time, Bret has defeated the best the WWF has had to offer, and legitimately can be described as a great wrestler. Could you see Owen beating Yokozuna or Diesel? Probably not. But Bret has done it! And if Owen is as good as he says he is, he could beat Bret more than once. He has yet to repeat his achievement at WrestleMania X.

All the boasting in the world will never raise Owen to the level of his older brother. I wish he'd stop this foolish jealousy and focus on his wrestling.

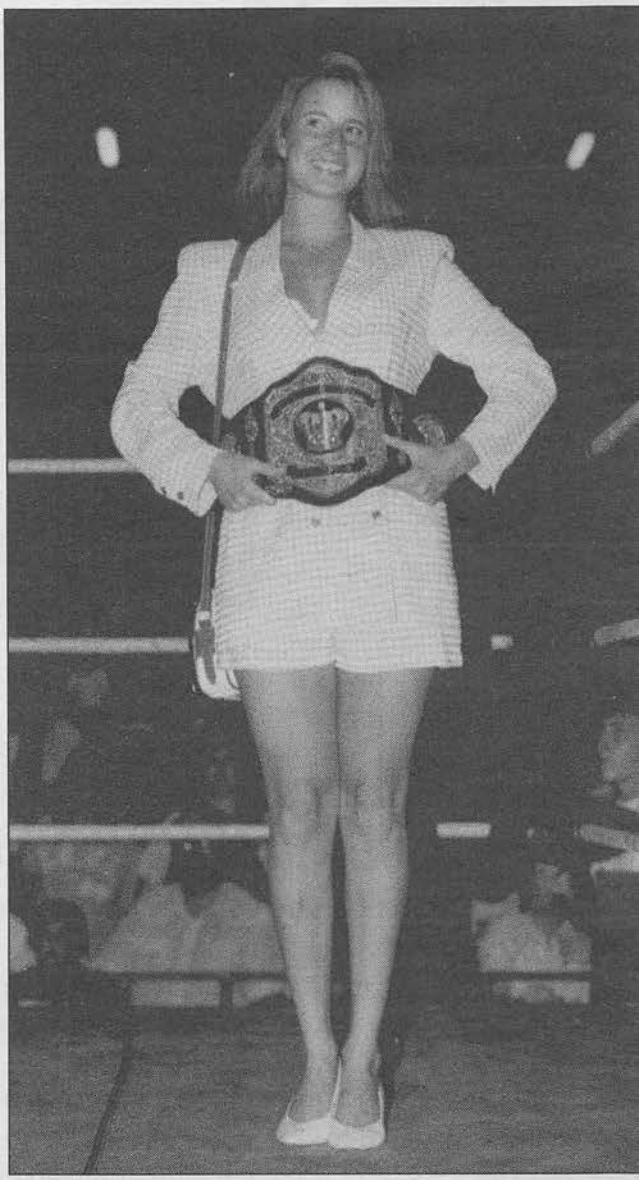
WALLY SEAGRAVES
Bayonne, NJ

FYTCH A-BLAYZE?

If Tammy Fytch is as good a manager as she claims to be (and I think she is), she should leave Smoky Mountain for a new challenge: joining the WWF to manage Alundra Blayze. What a combination that would be, especially since Blayze's current rival, Bull Nakano, is being guided by Luna Vachon.

Tammy says she's smart and liberated. Well, so is Alundra, who could use Fytch's outstanding managerial skills to raise awareness of her and the WWF women's division. This is a manager-wrestler relationship destined to happen, the sooner the better!

MARTHA BERNARD
Cheyenne, WY □

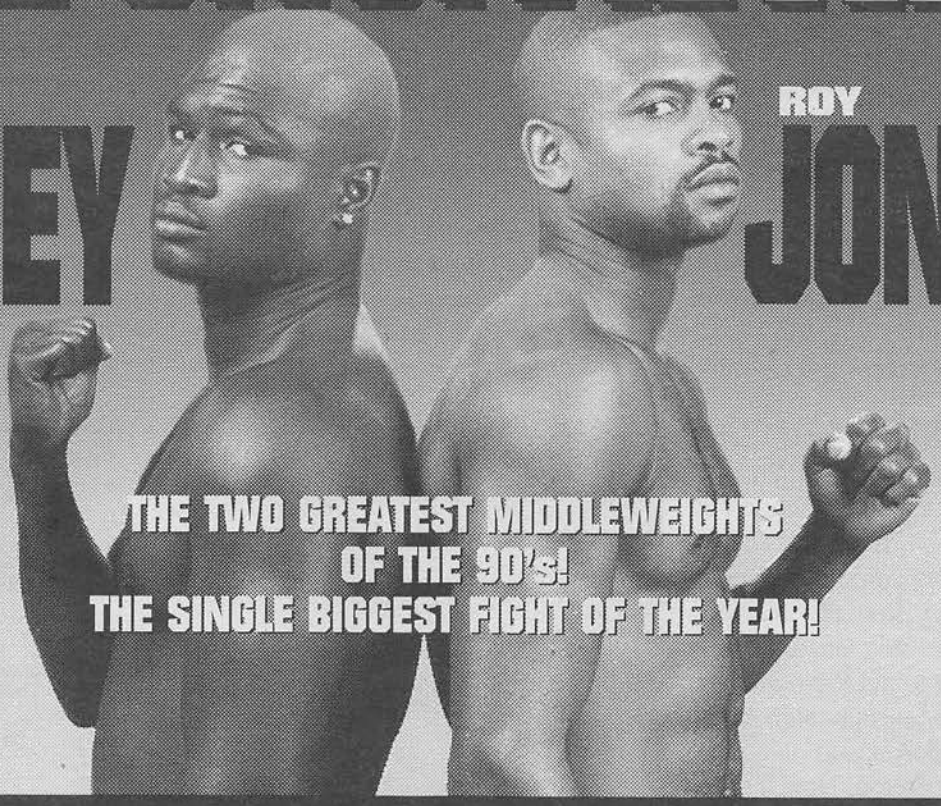


Tammy Fytch has been a championship manager in Smoky Mountain, but reader Martha Bernard says she should move to the WWF to manage World Women's champion Alundra Blayze.

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NO HOLDS BARRED

(Continued from page 8)

So maybe that's why WCW Commissioner Nick Bockwinkel let Flair get away with wrestling on WCW's European tour. Flair should have been suspended everywhere for his attack on Hogan—not that I don't enjoy watching Hogan limp—and Bockwinkel would have been completely justified in taking away all his title shots.

Instead, Bockwinkel rewarded Flair for attacking Hogan. And that's the way things are in pro wrestling.

Conduct unbecoming a champion?

"I'm not sure what that is," Sting said. "I know there's a certain way I want to act, especially when I'm wearing the belt, but I don't think you can say the same thing about everyone else. Listen, this is a very emotional sport and you can't expect everyone to act the right way all the time, especially step Flair. He's a perfectionist and he's very used to being on top. Now there's a bigger man than he in WCW and he doesn't like it at all. But that's what makes him a champion. He doesn't deal well with losing."

Throughout sports history, there have been many quotes about the virtues of losing. Vince Lombardi supposedly said, "Winning isn't everything. It's the only thing." Rick Barry said, "Show me a good loser and I'll show you a loser."

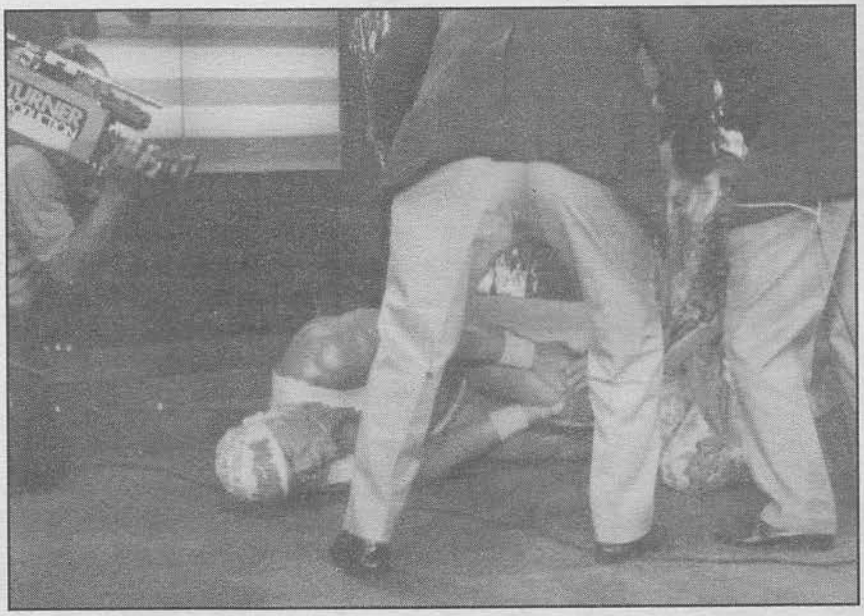
Taken in this context, Flair was acting properly when he attacked Hogan. Lombardi would have done it. So would have Barry. And Charles Barkley would explain to you that he's not supposed to be a role model, but a basketball player.

The problem with sports is that they teach some dangerous lessons. Actually, they seem dangerous. The loudest message in sports is that winning is good and losing is bad. Sports teach us to hate losing. It's painful and there's no glory in the loser's locker room. The winners get the prizes and the glory, the losers make the excuses.

Of course, in our society we're taught that a loser should take his hit like a man and shake his opponent's hand. At the same time, we're taught that it's a dog-eat-dog world out there and in business, one hand washes the other. Then we're shown something completely opposite in sports.

So perhaps we should use Flair as the good example, not the bad one. Why should our children be taught that there's anything noble about losing? There isn't. Losing stinks. You couldn't show me one time in history when losing was better than winning. Russia liberated Poland from Germany, but you'd better believe the Polish people would've rather been under Russia's oppressive rule than Germany's destructive, killer hand.

Conducting unbecoming a former champion. To me, that would mean not doing everything possible to regain the championship. It would mean sitting back and enjoying being second-best. Maybe Flair did things the wrong way, but he's in desperate times. Flair isn't thinking about right and wrong, but about results.



Hulk Hogan may have lost his dignity when he was whacked on the knee, but dignity really doesn't play a part in pro wrestling. Hogan should know.

As I write this, Hogan is still WCW World champion, but he's limping around some beach with a pretty large brace on his left knee. Flair's healthy and out for revenge. The most important lesson of Flair's past is that he's never an ex-champion for long, especially when he cares.

You'd better believe Flair cares.

That's why conduct unbecoming a former champion will soon become conduct unbecoming a champion. □

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CORRESPONDENTS REPORTS

(Continued from page 14)

Fayetteville, NC *(Correspondent—Paul Craven):* Sting and Ric Flair have had some classic matches over the years and they added one more chapter to their long-running rivalry here at the Cumberland County Civic Center.

Flair, who had Sherri Martel in his corner, got the best of Sting in the match's first few minutes. But every chop and kick he tried didn't seem to do much damage to the "Stinger." When the popular WCW star got angry, Flair paid the price. Twice, he lifted the "Nature Boy" over his head and slammed him to the canvas.

Flair was obviously in considerable pain as he slid out of the ring and began yelling at ringside fans. When he came back in, he caught Sting off-guard. His chops started to take their toll and he managed to get Sting in the figure-four, holding the ropes for extra leverage.

After Sting escaped the hold, Sherri got involved. Sting saw her in the ring and executed an atomic kneedrop on her. He pinned a stunned Flair with a backslide.

In other bouts: Brian Pillman pinned Bobby Eaton ... WCW TV champion Lord Steven Regal pinned Brad Armstrong ... Marcus Alexander Bagwell & The Patriot beat WCW World tag team champions Paul Orndorff & Paul Roma in a non-title match ... The Guardian Angel beat Big Van Vader by disqualification ... Then-U.S. champion Steve Austin defeated Rick Steamboat.



Sherri Martel will do just about anything to help her man Ric Flair against Sting. If that includes attacking an opponent such as Sting outside the ring, so be it. Nevertheless, Sting outlasted Sherri and pinned Flair.

Lincoln Park, MI *(Correspondent—Tony DeAngelo):* Al Snow is quickly becoming one of the best stars on the independent circuit. In the past few months, he has even defeated the maniacal Sabu. On this card, he had to face the 6'8", 350-pound Judge Dredd, the same man who injured two of the young wrestlers Snow is training on an earlier card.

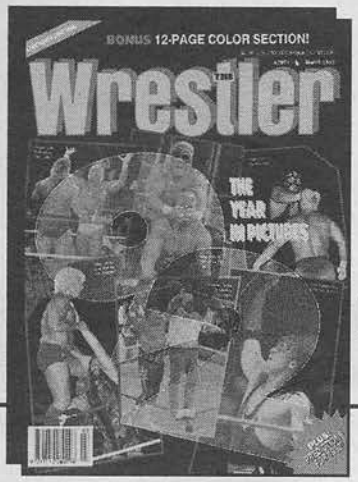
Dredd wanted to do the same to Snow and nearly did after delivering five consecutive clotheslines. Amazingly, Snow got right up after the last one. He then climbed to the top rope and delivered a powerful dropkick. He followed that up with a karate kick that sent Dredd through the ropes and onto the arena floor. He crashed into two more of Snow's students and was counted out.

After the match, Dredd reentered the ring, choke-slammed Snow, tied a rope around his neck, and hit him with a top-rope splash. Snow had to be helped back to the dressing room.

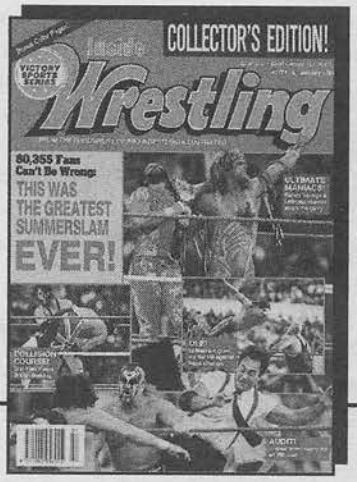
In other bouts: Scott D'Amore pinned Nightmare I ... Steve Nixon & Otis Apollo defeated Brian Rollins & Kodiak ... Ray Roberts and Rick Keller wrestled to a no-contest ... Mad Max Anthony beat Jake Steele ... Sabu pinned Tasmaniac. □

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YOU ASKED US

(Continued from page 16)

A: "Well, darlin', I didn't really have any favorite, though there were many good ones," Moolah said. "The reason was obvious—none of them could keep up with me! I was more of a singles wrestler, anyway, and was so good that a lot of my rivals concentrated on tags simply to capture any kind of title belt! Still, it'd be great to have more women's tag team matches today, since they're almost non-existent. I hope we see more of them soon."

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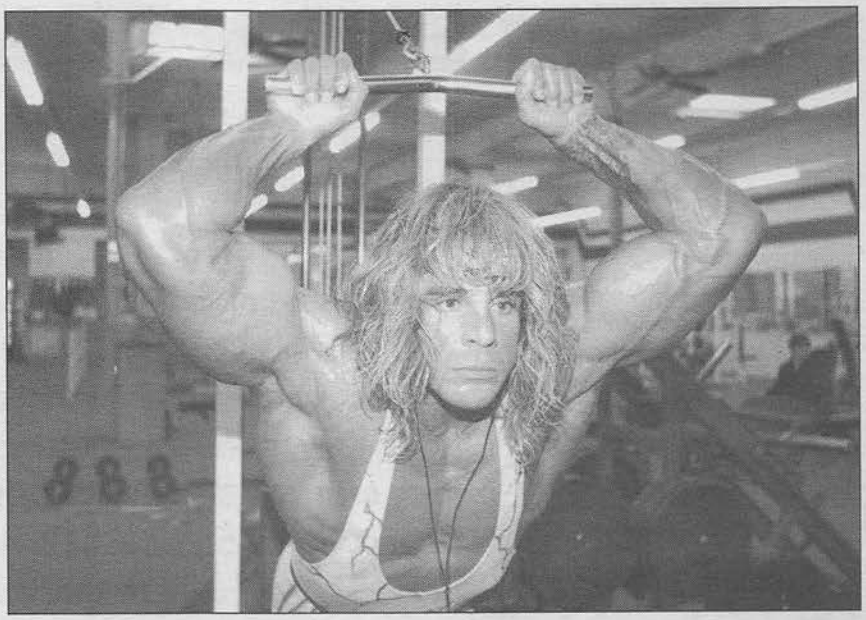
Q: "I'd like to ask 2 Cold Scorpio to compare wrestling in Japan and Mexico, since he's competed in both those countries."—Antonio Richards, Cincinnati, OH

A: "That's hard to say, because I've enjoyed both places," Scorpio said. "Both Mexico and Japan like my aerial style, and I've learned a lot in each country. I don't mean just wrestling, but culturally as well, living in a place where few people speak English. It makes you appreciate what those guys face when they wrestle in America."

***

Q: "I have a question for The Ultimate Warrior: Why don't you make a comeback in WCW or the WWF? I have always enjoyed watching you wrestle."—John Wright, Oskaloosa, IA

A: "I appreciate the compliment, John," Warrior replied. "I may return to a wrestling ring sooner than you think, but the time and conditions have to be right before I'll do it. I must make sure I'm at my best when I do return, because it's fans like you who keep me going. Thanks again, and always believe!"



Ultimate Warrior says he may return to wrestling soon. However, he wants to make sure he comes back to at the right time so he won't disappoint his fans.

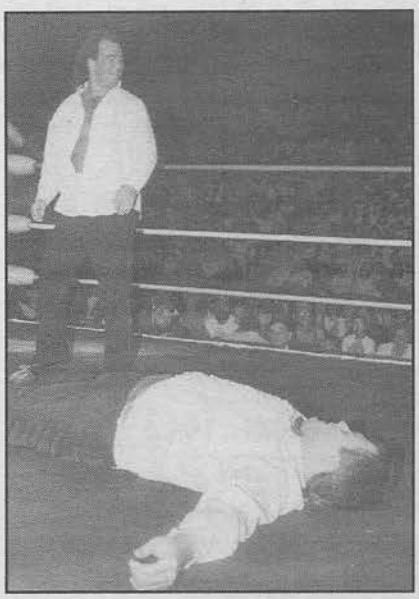
Q: "My question is for Senior Editor Bill Apter: Who is the better manager, Paul E. Dangerously or Jim Cornette?"—Monica Sheppard, Great Falls, MT

A: "They're both very good at what they do, Monica," Apter answered. "Their styles are somewhat different, as Dangerously likes having a stable of singles wrestlers whereas Cornette is more at home with tag teams. All I know is I would hate to manage against either one!"

***

Q: "My question is for Brittany Brown: You've dominated women's wrestling in New England for years. How would you do against WWF World Women's champion Alundra Blayze?"—Sally Gregory, Brattleboro, VT

A: "She's a fine wrestler, Sally, but I'm certain I could beat her," Brown answered. "Alundra has faced the same opponents for so long—Heidi Lee Morgan, Luna Vachon, and now Bull Nakano—that I could catch her off-guard. I want that match as much as you do. Let's see if the WWF has the guts to set it up the next time it comes to New England!" □



According to Senior Editor Bill Apter, managers Paul E. Dangerously (standing) and Jim Cornette are equally successful, though their styles and strengths are slightly different.

BACK ISSUES OF THE Wrestler

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July 1987/Stories include: Cornette, Hyatt, Luger, Harts, Adams, Hansen.
August 1987/Stories include: Can-Ams, Luger vs. Nikita, Fantastics, Koko, Nord.
November 1987/Stories include: Williams, Luger, Hogan-Khan, Rich.
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March 1988/Stories include: Hogan, Luger-Sting, Calgary, Demolition.
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October 1988/Stories include: Rhodes, Fantastics, Hennig, Roberts-Rude.
November 1988/Stories include: Midnight Ex., DiBiase, Bossman, Brody.
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January 1990/Stories include: Pillman, Hogan, Rich-Luger, Tully & Arn.
February 1990/Stories include: Sting-Luger, Gordy, Martel, Hogan-Brown.
March 1990/Stories include: Steiners, Flair-Funk, Hogan-Zeus, Survivors.
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August 1990/Stories include: Hogan-Warrior, Embry, Demolition, Doom.
September 1990/Stories include: Ultimate, Haynes, Luger, Doom, Tugboat.
October 1990/Stories include: Hogan-Earthquake, Ultimate, Flair, Rich.
November 1990/Stories include: Luger & Sting, Beefcake, Race, Steiners.
February 1991/Stories include: Sting-Vicious, Muta-Steamboat, Warrior, Hogan.
March 1991/Stories include: Hogan-Warrior, Piper, Cornette, Steiners.
April 1991/Stories include: Hogan, DiBiase, Skyscrapers, Luger, Zenk.
May 1991/Stories include: Hogan-Slaughter, Flair, Eaton, Sheik-Bobo.
June 1991/Stories include: Hogan, Nastys, Sting, Flair, Cactus Jack.
July 1991/Stories include: Flair-Fujinami, Nastys, Steiners, Savage.
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November 1991/Stories include: Luger, Steamboat, Piper, Global.
December 1991/Stories include: Flair-Hogan, Beverlys, Sting-Luger.
January 1992/Stories include: LOD, Badd, Hughes, Roberts, Gossett.
February 1992/Stories include: Flair, Simmons, Santana, Backlund.
March 1992/Stories include: Pillman, WWF title, Rude, Mountie-Hart.
April 1992/Stories include: Bearer, WCW magic, Hennig & Flair, LPWA.
May 1992/Stories include: Flair, Anderson & Eaton, Piper, Rhodes, USWA.
June 1992/Stories include: Flair-Hogan-Justice, Gilbert, Warrior, Vegas.
July 1992/Stories include: Rude, LOD, Madusa, Monsoon, Nurse Vanessa.
August 1992/Stories include: Warrior, Bunkhouse, Undertaker-Roberts, Sting.
September 1992/Stories include: LOD, Repo vs. Crush, Kleen, Freebirds.
October 1992/Stories include: Bulldog & Warrior, Lee, Martel-Tatanka, Austin.
November 1992/Stories include: Crush, Reed, Hennig, Sting, Rogers.
December 1992/Stories include: Hogan, Roberts, Simmons, Rock 'n' Rolls.
January 1993/Stories include: Ramon-Savage, Sting-Roberts, Disasters.
February 1993/Stories include: Hart, Rick Steiner, Backlund, Austin.
April 1993/Stories include: What's in/out, Ramon, Steamboat, Patriot, Tatanka.
June 1993/Stories include: Sting-Vader, Doink & Christopher, Steiners, Lawler.
July 1993/Stories include: Smith-Vader, Ramon, Rhodes, Tatanka, Bravo murder.
August 1993/Stories include: Hogan-Yokozuna, Jarrett, Vicious, Hart, Payne.
September 1993/Stories include: Ramon, Steiners, Simmons, Hart, Sting & Davey Boy.
October 1993/Stories include: Vader & Vicious, SummerSlam lists, sHart-Lawler.
November 1993/Stories include: Rude-Flair, Hogan, Luger, Jannetty, Bodies, Power
December 1993/Stories include: Luger, Sting & Flair, Fytch, Luna, Austin.
January 1994/Stories include: Hogan, Rude-Flair, Bagwell & Scorpio, Cornette.
February 1994/Stories include: Vicious & Arn, Yokozuna, Vader-Cactus, steroids.Bombs.
April 1994/Stories include: Hogan, Savage-Crush, Flair, Blayze, Adams, Boss.
May 1994/Stories include: Royal Rumble, Hulk minus bulk, Boss, Douglas-Sherri.
July 1994/Stories include: Flair vs. Hogan, DiBiase, Crockett, Douglas, WWF.
August 1994/Stories include: Cactus-Vader, M.O.M., Hart & Yokozuna, Badd.
October 1994/Stories include: Undertaker, Cactus, Scorpio-Sabu, Funk-Sheik.

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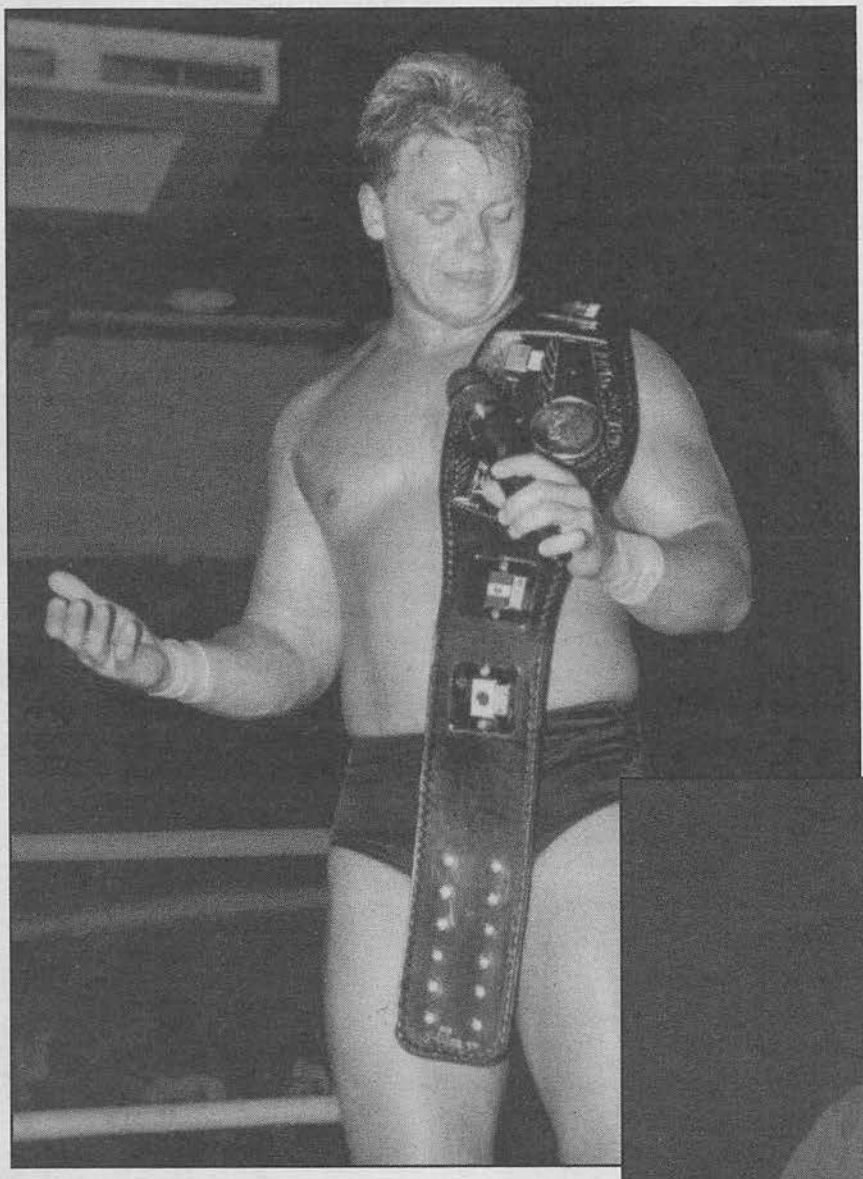
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WHAT'S HAPPENING

(Continued from page 7)

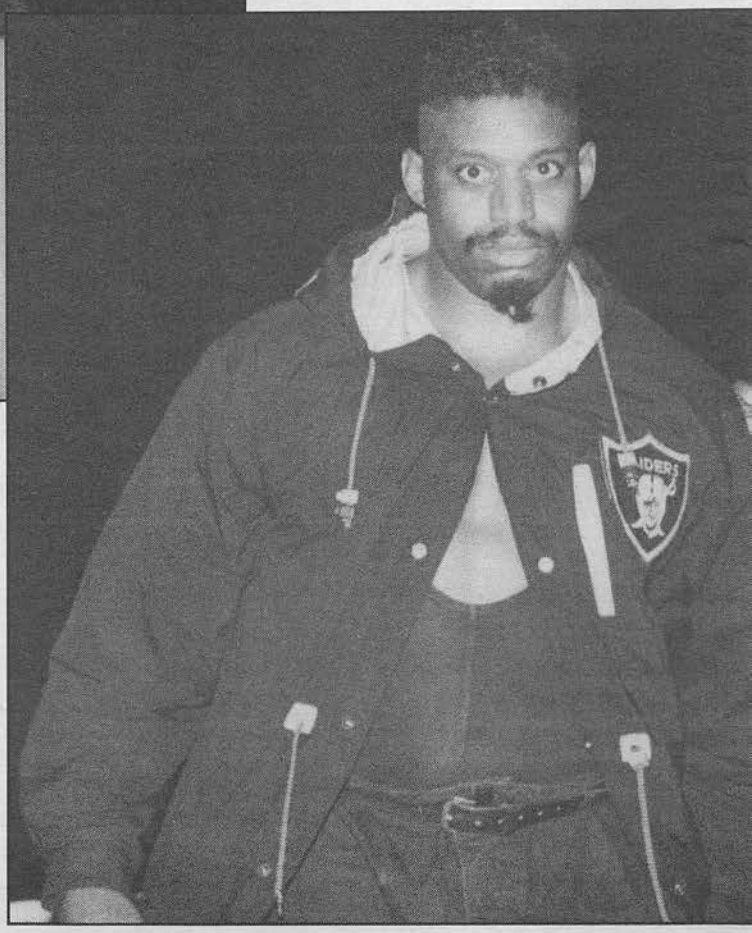


Shane Douglas glances at the NWA title belt he had just won in a tournament. He evidently didn't think too much of it, because he soon threw it down and declared himself ECW champion instead.

Hogan's appeal helped the Clash achieve a 4.5 rating, the highest for *any* program on TBS this year. That includes games played by **Ted Turner's** other two pro sports properties—baseball's Braves and basketball's Hawks. Incidentally, we wish Turner well as he recovers from minor skin cancer surgery.

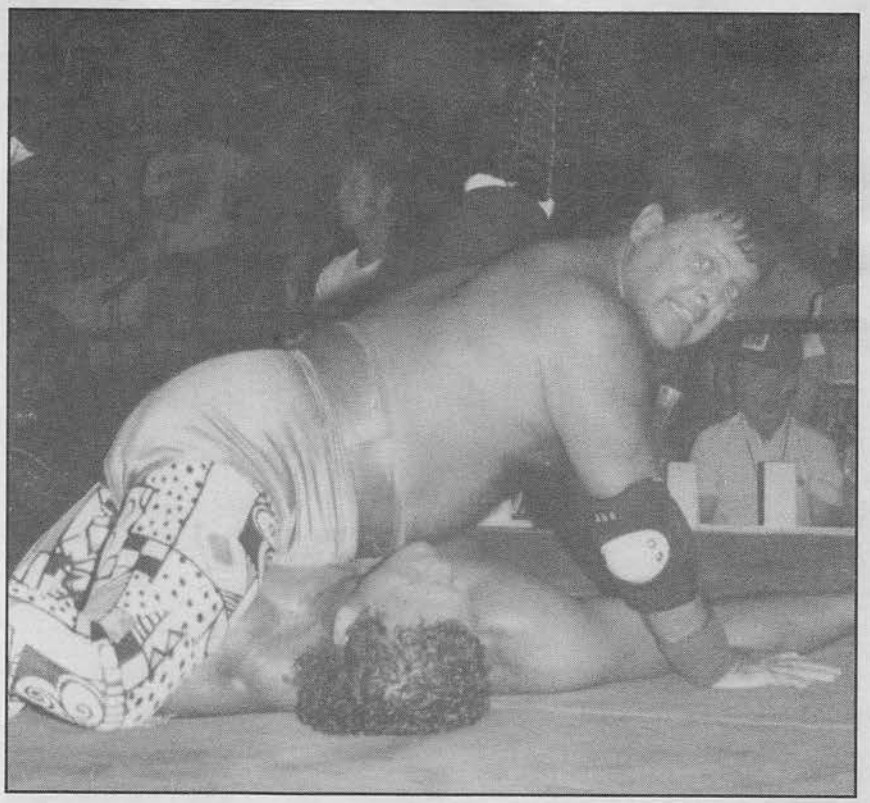
WCW was to have have promoted its first card at Madison Square Garden's main area November 26, but the WWF exercised an option to hold a card of its own on that date, forcing its rival promotion out.

Eastern Championship Wrestling has gone to extremes. That's not news to anyone who has seen its wild, violent matches, but this time we mean it literally. ECW has changed its name, but kept its



Can't we all just get along? The Gangstas apparently don't think so. Their views on race relations in general are making them Smoky Mountain's most despised tag team.

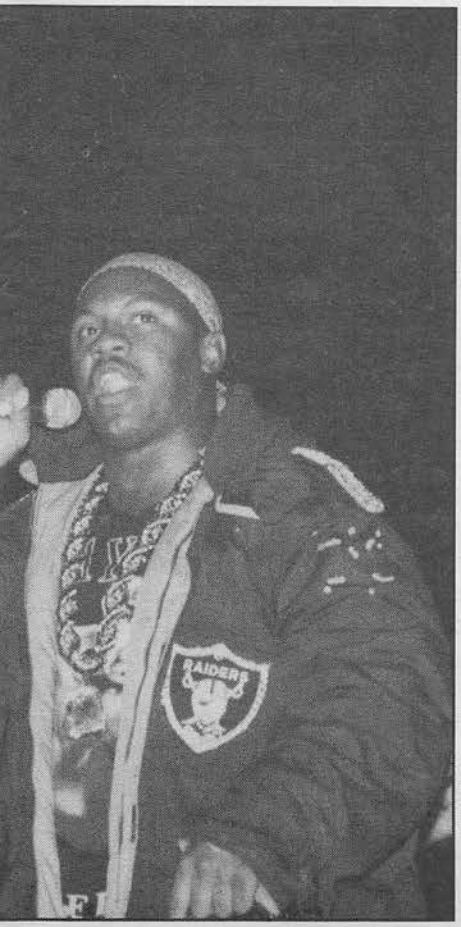
Jerry Lawler is continuing his pursuit of USWA heavyweight champion Sid Vicious and insists he'll beat him and regain the belt once he gets a fair match against the Arkansas native.



acronym. It's now *Extreme* Championship Wrestling. Why the change? **Tod Gordon's** federation now holds cards in Florida and New York and plans to expand westward in the coming year.

Before altering its name, ECW hosted an NWA championship tournament, won by **Shane Douglas** over fellow WCW alumnus **2 Cold Scorpio**. After winning, Douglas threw the belt down and said he refused to be champion "of a dead federation." Some people simply have no respect for history!

Tammy Fytch rose to managerial prominence in Smoky Mountain Wrestling thanks in part to **Brian Lee**. Now the two have parted company bitterly after Lee and **Chris Candido** lost the tag team belts to **The Rock 'n' Roll Express**. It was the third time in four days that they had swapped the belts, and Fytch fired Lee. He vows revenge.



SMW also has another tag team, **The Gangstas,** whose radical views on the **O.J. Simpson** case and race relations have enraged many fans. One said of the duo, "I'd like to have them wrestle **Col. DeBeers** and **Ludvig Borga** in a tag team match. In a jail cell. With the key thrown away."

USWA champion **Sid Vicious** shows no signs of letting go of his title anytime soon. Vicious has dominated the federation since winning the belt, something atypical of the volatile Memphis scene, where titles change hands rapidly.

"Once I get him cleanly, things will change!" said **Jerry Lawler**, who lost the belt to Vicious after Sid assaulted him earlier on a card and left him unable to come to the ring for his title defense. "He's so big, he's so tough, but he won't wrestle me one-on-one. And I'm supposed to be impressed?"

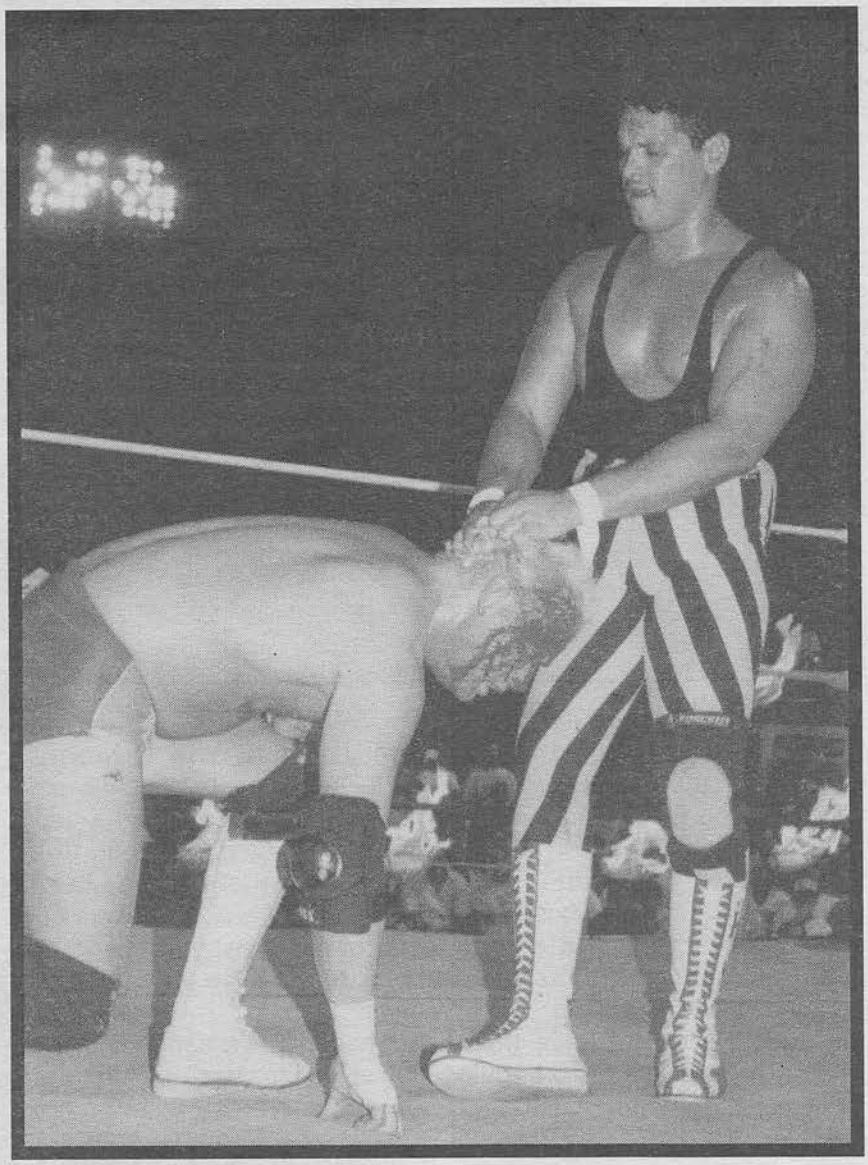
USWA rulebreakers and fan favorites got together in Nashville for their third annual celebrity softball game. Predictably, in a game in which baserunners had to be brought down and pinned before being tagged out, there were several bench-clearing brawls. The favorites, by the way, won the game, 14-7.

That's what's happening. See you at the matches! □

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DOUG GILBERT

(Continued from page 61)



Doug was aware Eddie was about to face Hurricane Castillo Jr. in a fire match in Puerto Rico. So he contacted Castillo about rubbing out his brother—but then had second thoughts.

was in Puerto Rico, competing in the often-wild World Wrestling Council. He was disappointed but not shocked by the news.

"If I've heard about it, you know the other maniacs down here have heard about it," Eddie reasoned. "It doesn't take much to set these guys off, and the fans get caught up in it pretty quick, too. This ain't the best place for an *Americano* to be when someone's looking for you, you know what I mean? But I'm ready for anything. Hell, I was born ready. Doug should know that."

It may not take much to excite the WWC and its fans, but it takes an awful lot to excite Eddie Gilbert. Although just 225 pounds, he is one of the toughest wrestlers in the sport. His battles with Cactus Jack in the defunct Tri-State Wrestling Alliance and his targeting of Memphis icon Jerry Lawler are testament to his toughness. The fact that his own brother was willing to pay to see him lying in his own blood just pumps more adrenaline into his competitive juices.

But was Eddie ready for a furied Hurricane Castillo Jr.? He had recently burned him, thus causing Castillo to demand—and get—a fire match. What made it worse, our sources revealed, was that Doug had talked to Castillo in the meantime, aware this was a perfect setting to do away with Eddie.

Later, Doug began his own version of the hesitation waltz. Apparently, he had second thoughts about turning his brother into a wrestling martyr, and told Castillo and others to lay off any unnecessary violence.

"He told Hurricane he had thought about it and decided it wasn't worth it," a friend of Castillo's said through an interpreter. "He said, 'Win the match by all means, humiliate Eddie all you can, but don't do anything I might regret later.' Hurricane reluctantly relented. He wanted revenge of his own."

Doug may not be a movie buff, but does follow what's going on in wrestling. He sees what a feud between brothers has done to the Hart family in the WWF.

Bret and Owen will never be able to look at each other the same way again, and with the brothers at each other's throats, family and friends have felt obliged to take sides, fracturing further the long-term relationships that were once based on trust.

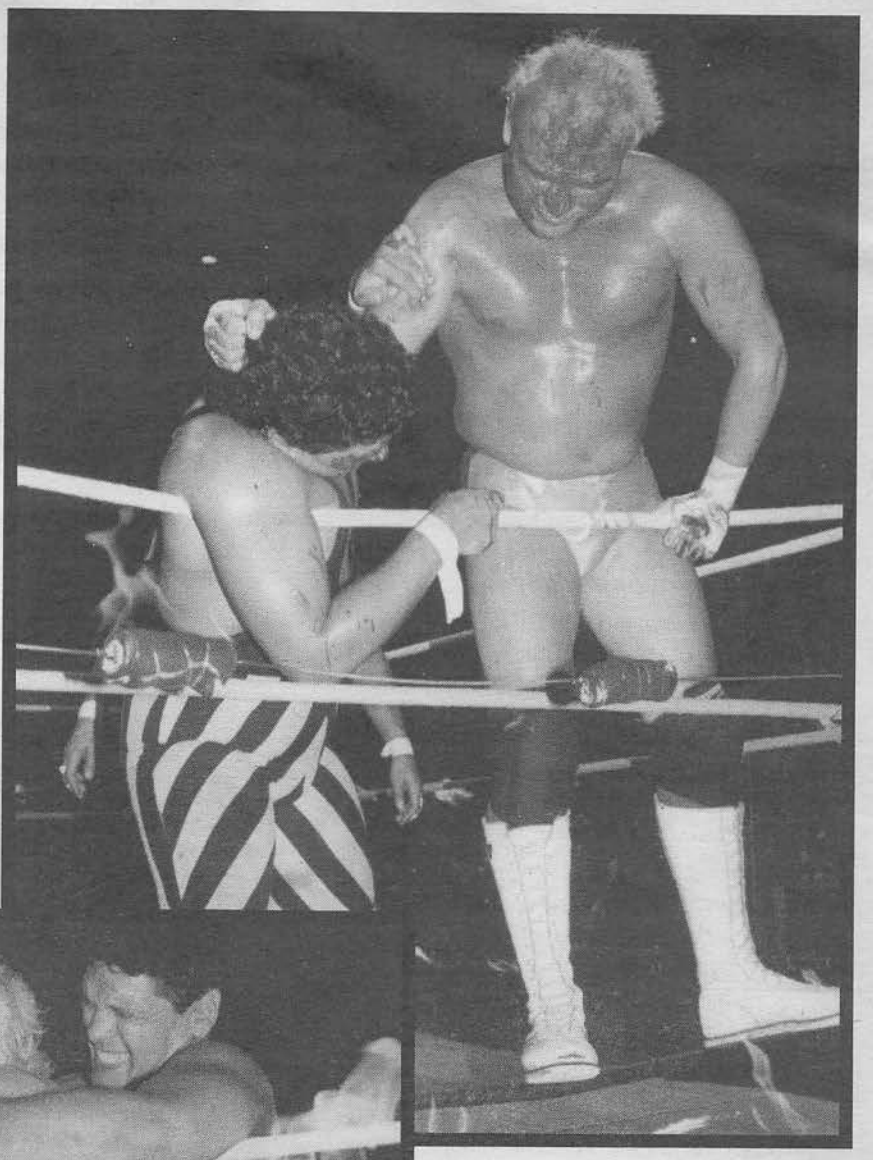
He has been through a feud with Eddie before, and they were somehow able to patch things up. Publicly, Doug is displaying a strong facade,

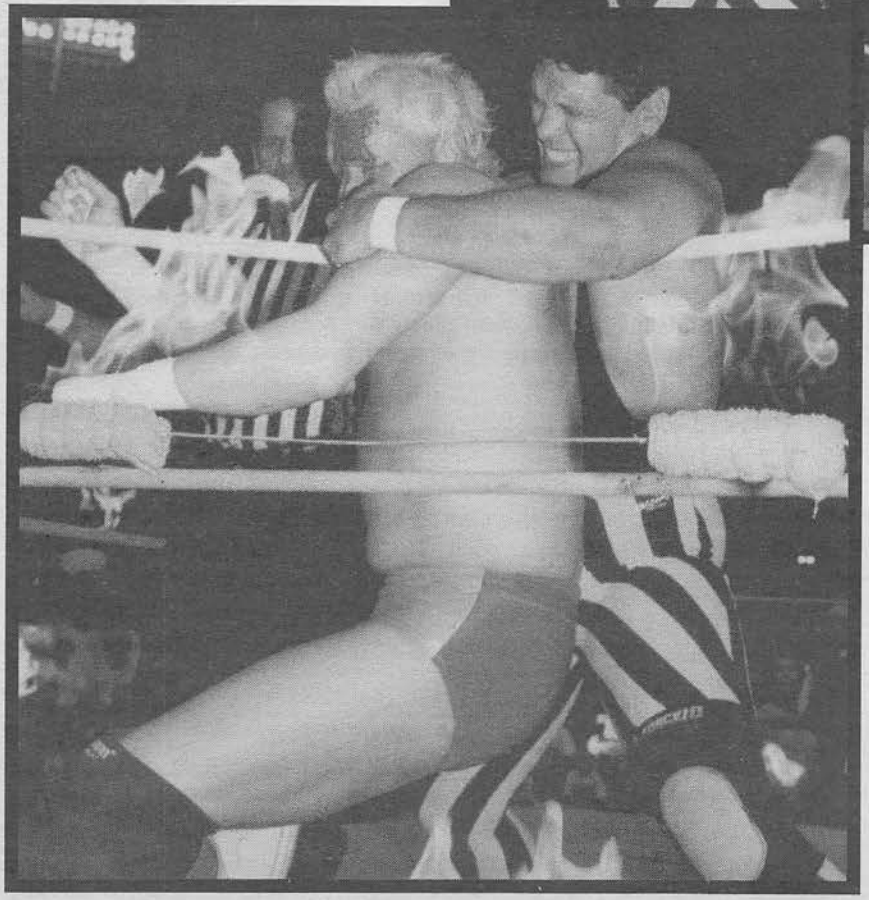
but those close to him know there are cracks in the concrete.

"He never thought it would come to this," a colleague said. "He just wanted Eddie to know that he was his own man and didn't want to be known as 'Eddie's little brother' anymore. I'm sure Owen felt the same way when he went after Bret. But he's doing it the way it should be done—one-on-one, in the ring, and let's see who is the better man. Instead, Doug's got half a federation looking to take out his brother, and if Eddie is badly hurt, the blood is going to be on his hands."

And that would cast a shadow Doug Gilbert might never be able to escape. □

Castillo agreed to follow Doug's revised instructions not to inflict any unnecessary injury on Eddie. But in the literally heated atmosphere of a fire match, Hurricane could not hold back (below)!





Eddie was disappointed by Doug's actions but not shocked, especially since the attack was planned for the frantic World Wrestling Council. "I'm ready for anything ... Doug should know that," he said.

Wrestler SPOTLIGHTS...

Every month, *THE WRESTLER* will comb through its extensive photo files and shine its spotlight on an outstanding wrestler, manager, or tag team. We'll present unforgettable highlights in the action-packed careers of the sport's greatest stars, culled from the most extensive photographic archives anywhere in the wrestling world!

PAUL E. DANGEROUSLY

ONE OF WRESTLING'S premier managers and most controversial personalities, the bombastic Paul E. Dangerously now handles the ECW careers of frantic aerialist Sabu and hulking bodyguard 911.

The loudmouth "Psycho Yuppie" from Scarsdale, New York, dreamed of being a manager even as a teenager, and learned the tricks of the trade from The Grand Wizard and other greats. He began his wrestling career as a ringside photographer for this chain of magazines. Paul E. finally achieved his ultimate goal in 1986, managing in Mid-South and the AWA. There, he assembled the first version of The Dangerous Alliance, with The Midnight Express, Dennis Condrey, Randy Rose, and Adrian Adonis. In Memphis, he feuded with Jerry Lawler.

Dangerously further honed his craft in several independent federations, including Windy City Wrestling and Southern Championship Wrestling. One promoter said of him, "If his muscles were as big as his mouth, he could take Hulk Hogan and break him in half."

In 1989, Dangerously moved to WCW, and eventually his new Dangerous Alliance—Rick Rude, Steve Austin, Arn Anderson, Bobby Eaton, and Larry Zbyzsko—ran roughshod throughout the federation. At one point, all but Zbyszko held titles.



January 1981: Even at 15, Paul E. Dangerously dreamed of becoming a wrestling manager. He often hung around with greats like Fred Blassie, Capt. Lou Albano, and The Grand Wizard, soaking up knowledge from these legendary men.

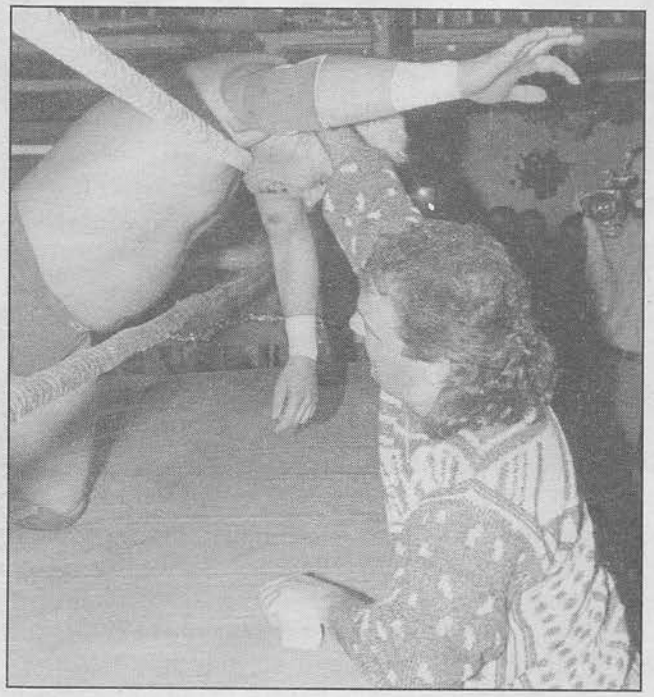
Dangerously had the most powerful stable in wrestling since the heyday of The Four Horsemen. He was named Manager of the Year for 1992 by ***Pro Wrestling Illustrated*** *readers, and celebrated his triumph with a VIP party at a club in his beloved Manhattan.*

But the Alliance dissolved from within. Dangerously fired Madusa Miceli, its "Director Of Covert Operations," and was humiliated by her in several subsequent matches. He eventually resurfaced in ECW, where a new version of The Dangerous Alliance never really caught fire. However, he's had plenty of success with Sabu and 911, and remains among the shrewdest managers around.

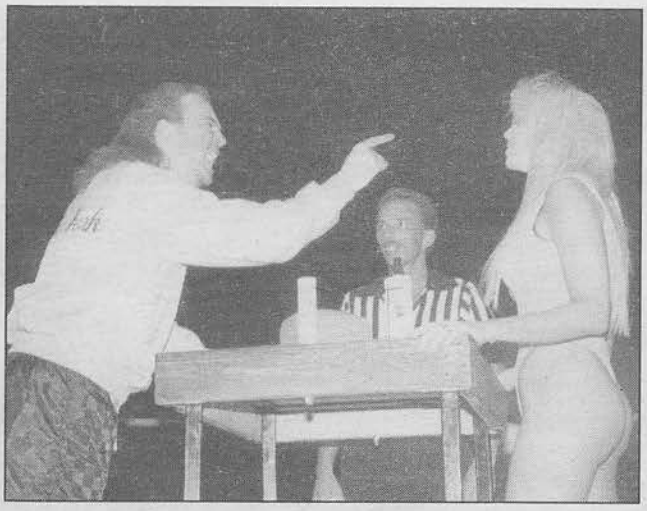
Dangerously is known for his cellular phone, which he carries around everywhere to stay in touch with his many contacts—and bash an occasional foe. Readers of THE WRESTLER can connect with him through his time here in the "Spotlight."



▶ July 1989: Jim Cornette (left) and Dangerously are somewhat cut from the same cloth—but that doesn't mean they like each other! These elite managers go at it in Baltimore as part of NWA's Great American Bash.

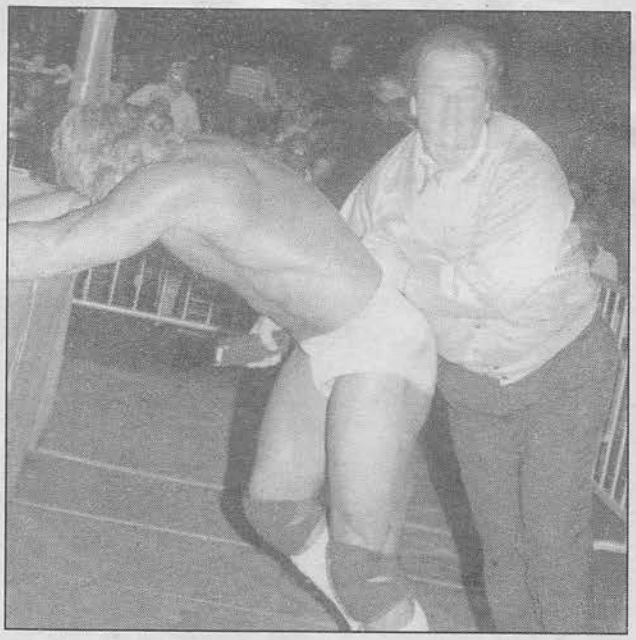


▲ January 1988: Dangerously was beginning to make his presence felt on the independent circuit. In Georgia, Paul E. caused all sorts of havoc to make life miserable for stars like Tommy Rich, whom he once managed.

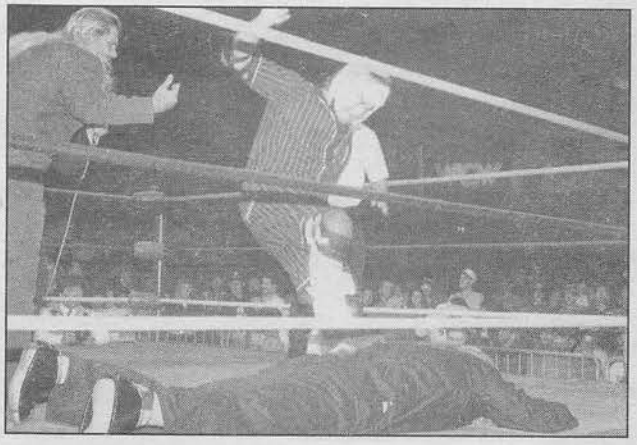


▲ June 1991: Paul E. began feuding with WCW commentator Missy Hyatt, who claimed she "was more of a man than [he'll] ever be." Missy did beat Dangerously in an arm-wrestling match, but only after distracting him with her anything-but-manly physique!

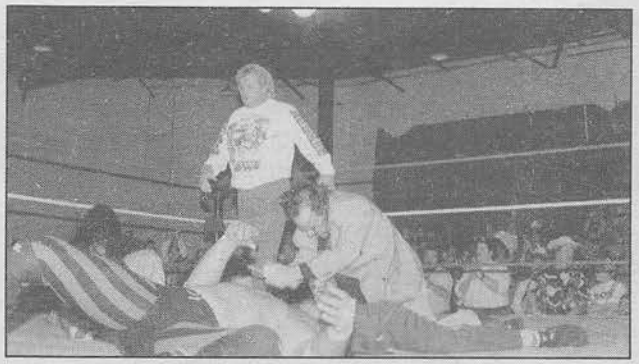
▼ September 1990: Now firmly entrenched in WCW, Dangerously let no one get in the way of his Dangerous Alliance. That includes Lex Luger, whom he couldn't stop from beating Mark Callous.



▼ November 1992: Paul E. thinks he's attacking Madusa, whom he just knocked out, at Clash of the Champions XXI in Macon, Georgia. The joke's on him—it's prelim wrestler Mike Thor! The real Madusa came out and clobbered Paul E.



▼ May 1994: Dangerously uses his cellular phone not only for communication, but for intimidation! He assaults Terry Funk with it at an ECW card in Philadelphia to help his tag team of Sabu and Bobby Eaton.



MATT BROCK'S LOOKING BACK

November 1963
LOU THESZ *vs.* DANNY HODGE



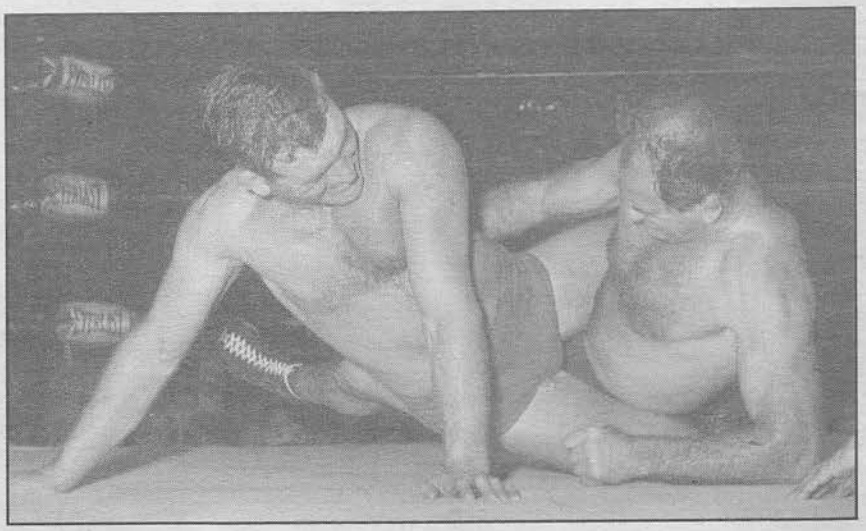
NOT LONG AGO, I was at a WWF card in Jersey where I witnessed one of those Bret Hart-Owen Hart 60-minute marathon matches. In case you haven't seen one, the object of the match is to score as many falls as you can in an hour's time. This one ended tied after 60 minutes, so an overtime period determined the winner. Bret scored the pinfall and claimed victory. Not a bad match.

These hour-long marathons are a great thing for old-timers and purists like myself. They bring back the old style of wrestling, where the guys would battle it out nonstop for 60 minutes or so. Nowadays, it's rare to see two competitors battle it out for 20 minutes, let alone an hour.

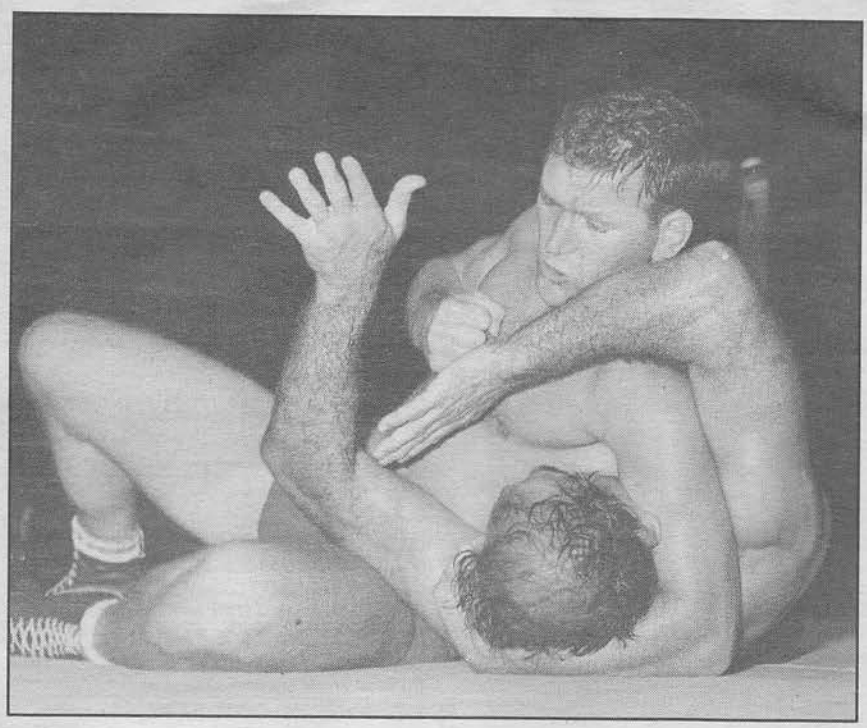
Champions were once required to defend their belts in matches that were best-of-three-falls, with a one-hour time limit. That's still done in some places these days, most noticeably Mexico, but domestically it's gone the way of Sunnyside Gardens and the Kiel Auditorium.

One wrestler who excelled at marathons was Lou Thesz. And why not? He excelled at virtually everything else on the mat. He took on all comers, both scientific and rulebreaker. He repeatedly proved to the world that he was worthy of holding the prestigious NWA title.

One of my fondest memories in this sport was the night Thesz was required to put up the strap against NWA junior heavyweight champion Danny Hodge. The challenger—a former Olympic wrestler and professional boxer—



Fans of technical wrestling got their money's worth—and more—when NWA World champion Lou Thesz put up his title belt against junior heavyweight champ Danny Hodge in Houston in 1963.



Tempers flaired as both men grew frustrated over not being able to score a pinfall. At one point, Hodge had to hold himself back from throwing a punch.

earned his title shot by dominating that division, and even beat all the heavyweight foes he faced as well. I don't believe The Kid or Brian Pillman could do that today.

Hodge's opponents would walk back to the dressing room scratching their heads, wondering what in the hell just happened, and why they couldn't beat a guy who they outweighed by 25 to 30 pounds. Hodge parlayed such success into a match with Thesz. They were no strangers to each other, as Hodge had beaten Thesz, then a non-champion, the year before in Knoxville, Tennessee. In April of '63, Hodge came very close to upsetting Thesz in Little Rock, Arkansas.

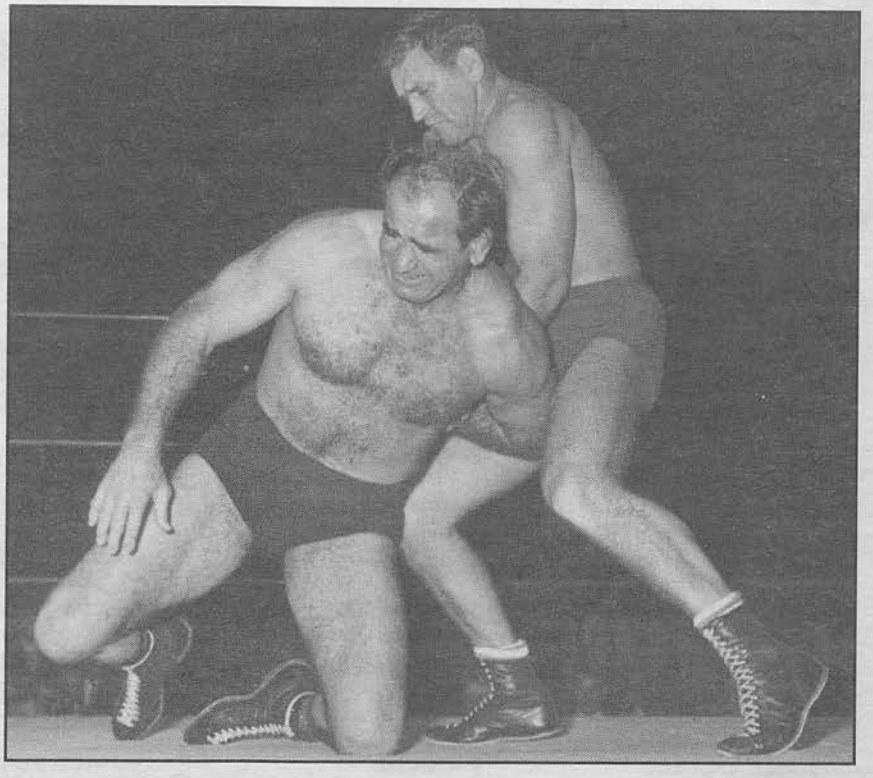
The promoter, recognizing the significance of the match, sanctioned it not for a mere 60 minutes, but *90 minutes*, best-of-three falls. That's right, an hour and a half of pure wrestling. Take it from me, not a moment of it was boring.

Both displayed their entire scientific repertoires, executing wrestling maneuvers that aren't even seen in this sport anymore. Everything they had was displayed for the sellout crowd. While both essentially stuck to the rulebook, at some points during the match, human emotions naturally took over. But before anything could get out of hand, sanity reigned once more and both returned to wrestling.

And wrestle they did. For 90 minutes, these two champions gave it their all. The remarkable thing about this contest is that neither man scored a pinfall. I was wowed. At the end of the time limit, the fans thanked them with a long standing ovation. It may have been a draw, but both men were winners.

Thesz eventually beat Hodge in the rematch in Houston a month later, but this outstanding scientific contest was one of his toughest title defenses. A car accident later brought Hodge's career to a premature end, as he narrowly avoided total paralysis.

I hope the rest of the wrestling world can take notice and sanction more marathon matches. The fans deserve nothing less. □

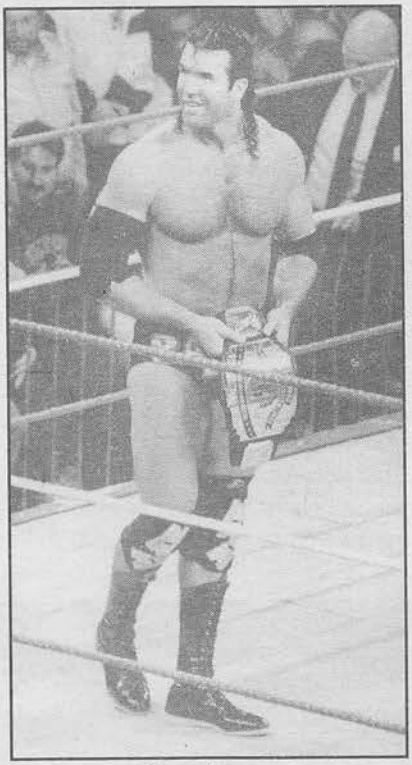


Thesz grimaces in pain as Hodge applies a hammerlock. Action like this went unabated for a full 90 minutes, but neither wrestler could achieve a pin and this epic battle ended in a draw. Thesz won a subsequent rematch.

The Wrestler

TOP 10

1. **HULK HOGAN**
   275, Venice Beach, CA
   (2) WCW World champion
2. **BRET HART**
   234, Calgary, Alberta
   (1) WWF World champion
3. **RICK STEAMBOAT**
   238, Honolulu, HI
   (-) U.S. heavyweight champion
4. **RAZOR RAMON**
   287, Miami, FL
   (-) WWF Intercontinental champion
5. **THE UNDERTAKER**
   328, parts unknown
   (-) No. 2 contender: WWF World title
6. **RIC FLAIR**
   243, Minneapolis, MN
   (5) No. 2 contender: WCW World title
7. **STEVE AUSTIN**
   241, Dallas, TX
   (7) No. 5 contender: WCW World title
8. **SID VICIOUS**
   318, West Memphis, AR
   (-) USWA heavyweight champion
9. **TONY ANTHONY**
   235, Bucksnort, TN
   (9) Smoky Mountain champion
10. **SABU**
    220, Bombay
    (10) No. 1 contender: ECW title



Razor Ramon

TAG TEAMS

1. **DIESEL & SHAWN MICHAELS**
   Combined weight: 590 pounds
   (-) WWF World tag team champions
2. **THE NASTY BOYS**
   Combined weight: 585 pounds
   (6) No. 1 contenders: WCW World tag title
3. **MARCUS BAGWELL & THE PATRIOT**
   Combined weight: 491 pounds
   (2) No. 2 contenders: WCW World tag title
4. **PAUL ORNDORFF & PAUL ROMA**
   Combined weight: 488 pounds
   (3) WCW World tag team champions
5. **THE ROCK 'N' ROLL EXPRESS**
   Combined weight: 453 pounds
   (4) Smoky Mountain tag team champions
6. **LEX LUGER & RAZOR RAMON**
   Combined weight: 552 pounds
   (-) No. 1 contenders: WWF World tag title
7. **PG-13**
   Combined weight: 471 pounds
   (-) USWA tag team champions
8. **THE HEADSHRINKERS**
   Combined weight: 520 pounds
   (1) No. 2 contenders: WWF World tag title
9. **CACTUS JACK & MIKEY WHIPWRECK**
   Combined weight: 464 pounds
   (-) ECW tag team champions
10. **GEORGE SOUTH & ITALIAN STALLION**
    Combined weight: 473 pounds
    (-) PWF tag team champions

WCW

World Champion:
HULK HOGAN
(C) 275, Venice Beach, CA

1. **RICK STEAMBOAT** *(6) 238, Honolulu, HI*
2. **RIC FLAIR** *(4) 243, Minneapolis, MN*
3. **STING** *(2) 260, Venice Beach, CA*
4. **BIG VAN VADER** *(5) 450, Denver, CO*
5. **STEVE AUSTIN** *(1) 241, Dallas, TX*
6. **THE GUARDIAN ANGEL** *(7) 310, Cobb County, GA*
7. **ARN ANDERSON** *(9) 249, Minneapolis, MN*
8. **DUSTIN RHODES** *(8) 254, Austin, TX*
9. **STEVE REGAL** *(3) 247, Blackpool, England*
10. **HACKSAW DUGGAN** *(-) 280, Glens Falls, NY*

WWF

World Champion:
BRET HART
(C) 234, Calgary, Alberta

1. **RAZOR RAMON** *(3) 287, Miami, FL*
2. **THE UNDERTAKER** *(5) 328, parts unknown*
3. **DIESEL** *(1) 356, Las Vegas, NV*
4. **IRWIN R. SCHYSTER** *(7) 248, Syracuse, NY*
5. **JEFF JARRETT** *(-) 230, Nashville, TN*
6. **LEX LUGER** *(4) 265, Chicago, IL*
7. **JIM NEIDHART** *(-) 275, Tampa, FL*
8. **OWEN HART** *(2) 227, Calgary, Alberta*
9. **MABEL** *(-) 503, Harlem, NY*
10. **BAM BAM BIGELOW** *(-) 368, Mt. Laurel, NJ*

GLOBAL

Global Champion:
CHRIS ADAMS
(C) 228, Stratford, England

1. **JIMMY GARVIN** *(7) 242, Charlotte, NC*
2. **ACTION JACKSON** *(2) 281, Dallas, TX*
3. **ICEMAN PARSONS** *(5) 245, St. Louis, MO*
4. **MICHAEL HAYES** *(-) 255, Atlanta, GA*
5. **SCOTT PUTSKI** *(4) 235, Austin, TX*
6. **ROD PRICE** *(1) 265, Los Angeles, CA*
7. **TERRY GORDY** *(6) 289, Chattanooga, TN*
8. **MOADIB** *(-) 285, parts unknown*
9. **NICK GOLDEN** *(10) 238, Dallas, TX*
10. **ALEX PORTEAU** *(8) 235, Dallas, TX*

USWA

USWA Champion:
SID VICIOUS
(C) 318, West Memphis, AR

1. **DOUG GILBERT** *(1) 241, Lexington, TN*
2. **BRIAN CHRISTOPHER** *(3) 230, Memphis, TN*
3. **JERRY LAWLER** *(5) 234, Memphis, TN*
4. **KOKO B. WARE** *(9) 229, Union City, TN*
5. **TOMMY RICH** *(4) 248, Hendersonville, TN*
6. **BUDDY LANDELL** *(-) 236, Los Angeles, CA*
7. **JEFF GAYLORD** *(6) 280, St. Louis, MO*
8. **SPELLBINDER** *(10) 246, parts unknown*
9. **SPIKE HUBER** *(8) 234, Indianapolis, IN*
10. **DOUG BASHAM** *(-) 228, Memphis, TN*

OFFICIAL RATINGS

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. Most Popular and Most Hated ratings are based on nationwide telephone and arena surveys of wrestling fans and on the volume and character of mail that comes to our offices. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings. The number in parentheses indicates a wrestler's position in that category last issue; (-) indicates that the wrestler was not rated in that category last issue. while (C) indicates the wrestler was champion in that category last issue.

MOST POPULAR

1. **HULK HOGAN**
   275, Venice Beach, CA
   Last issue: No. 1 Most Popular
2. **BRET HART**
   234, Calgary, Alberta
   Last issue: No. 2 Most Popular
3. **RAZOR RAMON**
   287, Miami, FL
   Last issue: No. 3 Most Popular
4. **STING**
   260, Venice Beach, CA
   Last issue: No. 4 Most Popular
5. **RICK STEAMBOAT**
   238, Honolulu, HI
   Last issue: No. 5 Most Popular
6. **DUSTIN RHODES**
   254, Austin, TX
   Last issue: No. 6 Most Popular
7. **LEX LUGER**
   265, Chicago, IL
   Last issue: No. 7 Most Popular
8. **TONY ANTHONY**
   235, Bucksnort, TN
   Last issue: No. 8 Most Popular
9. **THE KID**
   212, Minneapolis, MN
   Last issue: No. 9 Most Popular
10. **RANDY SAVAGE**
    237, Sarasota, FL
    Last issue: unrated

MOST HATED

1. **BIG VAN VADER**
   450, Denver, CO
   Last issue: No. 1 Most Hated
2. **TATANKA**
   250, Pembroke, NC
   Last issue: No. 10 Most Popular
3. **BOB BACKLUND**
   234, Princeton, MN
   Last issue: No. 3 Most Hated
4. **ARN ANDERSON**
   249, Minneapolis, MN
   Last issue: No. 6 Most Hated
5. **SHAWN MICHAELS**
   234, San Antonio, TX
   Last issue: No. 4 Most Hated
6. **BUNKHOUSE BUCK**
   239, Bucksnort, TN
   Last issue: No. 8 Most Hated
7. **OWEN HART**
   227, Calgary, Alberta
   Last issue: No. 2 Most Hated
8. **STEVE AUSTIN**
   241, Dallas, TX
   Last issue: unrated
9. **JERRY LAWLER**
   234, Memphis, TN
   Last issue: unrated
10. **BAM BAM BIGELOW**
    368, Mt. Laurel, NJ
    Last issue: No. 5 Most Hated

For period ended September 16, 1994

CUMULATIVE RATINGS

These ratings are based on the past 10 issues of this magazine. We have examined our ratings for each of these issues in our Top 10 and Tag Team categories only, and assigned each position a point value: 10 points for a first-place rating, nine for second place, and so on. The point values for all wrestlers in the past 10 issues have been compiled, with a possible maximum of 100 points. Each issue we'll present the top five finishers in each category. While our regular ratings reflect the past month, these cumulative ratings give an indication of wider trends in the sport.

SINGLES

1—BRET HART ..... 86 points
2—RIC FLAIR ..... 81 points
3—STING ..... 48 points
4—STEVE AUSTIN ..... 45 points
5—RAZOR RAMON ..... 45 points

TAG TEAMS

1—THE NASTY BOYS ..... 86 points
2—THE HEADSHRINKERS ..... 51 points
3—THE QUEBECERS ..... 46 points
4—THE ROCK 'N' ROLL EXPRESS ..... 31 points
5—THE HEAVENLY BODIES ..... 30 points

SMOKY MOUNTAIN

Smoky Mountain Champion:
TONY ANTHONY
(C) 235, Bucksnort, TN

1. **BRUISER BEDLAM**
   (1) 235, Newark, NJ
2. **RICK MORTON**
   (-) 228, Memphis, TN
3. **CHRIS CANDIDO**
   (3) 226, Carteret, NJ
4. **BRIAN LEE**
   (-) 251, Los Angeles, CA
5. **BOO BRADLEY**
   (-) 310, parts unknown
6. **LANCE STORM**
   (7) 231, Memphis, TN
7. **KILLER KYLE**
   (5) 303, Atlanta, GA
8. **ROBERT GIBSON**
   (4) 225, Pensacola, FL
9. **TRACEY SMOTHERS**
   (2) 227, Atlanta, GA
10. **THE INFERNO**
    (6) 235, parts unknown

ECW

ECW Champion:
SHANE DOUGLAS
(C) 223, Pittsburgh, PA

1. **SABU**
   (1) 220, Bombay
2. **TOMMY DREAMER**
   (3) 245, Yonkers, NY
3. **911**
   (6) 310, parts unknown
4. **2 COLD SCORPIO**
   (5) 222, Denver, CO
5. **CACTUS JACK**
   (4) 277, Truth or Consequences, NM
6. **MR. HUGHES**
   (8) 308, Kansas City, KS
7. **JASON**
   (7) 216, Philadelphia, PA
8. **TASMANIAC**
   (10) 221, Tasmania
9. **TERRY FUNK**
   (2) 247, Amarillo, TX
10. **MIKEY WHIPWRECK**
    (-) 187, New York, NY

AAA: AAA Champion—Konnan; 1—El Hijo Del Santo; 2—Blue Panther; 3—The Love Machine; 4—Perro Aguayo; 5—Psicosis; 6—La Parka; 7—Eddy Guerrero; 8—Octagon; 9—Cien Caras; 10—Rey Mysterio Jr..

IWCCW: IWCCW Champion—Tito Santana; 1—Tony Atlas; 2—Greg Valentine; 3—Hacksaw Duggan; 4—Rick Martel; 5—Osamu Nishimura; 6—The Funny Clown; 7—Vic Steamboat; 8—Ray Odyssey; 9—Sabu; 10—Al Snow.

MTW: MTW Champion—Machine Gun Kelly; 1—Al Snow; 2—Bobo Brazil Jr.; 3—Sean Casey; 4—Bastion Booger; 5—Chris Carter; 6—Denny Kass; 7—Johnny Paradise; 8—Scott Summers; 9—Sabu; 10—Scott The Rock.

PWA: PWA Champion—The Hater; 1—Charlie Norris; 2—Nailz; 3—Hawk; 4—Blake Beverly; 5—Tommy Ferraro; 6—Storm Trooper Aaron; 7—Storm Trooper Willie; 8—Jerry Lynn; 9—Derrick Dukes; 10—Punisher.

PWF: PWF Champion—Russian Assassin II; 1—Italian Stallion; 2—George South; 3—Star Ryder; 4—Flaming Youth; 5—Cruel Connection II; 6—Brian Williams; 7—Troy Conyers; 8—Gladiator II; 9—Terry Austin; 10—Austin Steele.

WWA: WWA Champion—Friendly Frank; 1—King Kong Bundy; 2—Abudah Singh; 3—Ray Odyssey; 4—Boy Gone Bad; 5—Ed Atlas; 6—Chris Weider; 7—Akita Kaos; 8—Gus the Greek; 9—Ramblin' Rich; 10—Duane Gill.

WWWA: WWWA Champion—Brutus Beefcake; 1—Jack Hammer; 2—Rick Martel; 3—Ax; 4—Nailz; 5—Hawk; 6—Sid Vicious; 7—Abdullah the Butcher; 8—The Zombie; 9—Blast; 10—Harley Lewis.

RATINGS ANALYSIS

Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating over 200 wrestlers in 19 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important—and respected—ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans

NWA title controversy. Finally, after months and months of waiting, a new NWA champion was crowned. An eight-man tournament was held on an ECW card in Philadelphia. **Shane Douglas** defeated **Tasmaniac**, **Dean Malenko**, and **2 Cold Scorpio** to capture the title.

However, Douglas, who is also ECW heavyweight champion, told the fans afterward that he didn't want to be champion of a "dead federation." He threw the belt down and said the ECW title is the only one that matters to him. (Incidentally, Commissioner **Tod Gordon** announced several days later that NWA *Eastern* Championship Wrestling had been dissolved, with *Extreme* Championship Wrestling taking its place. Douglas is its initial champion.)

So the NWA title confusion rages on. Douglas' actions angered several NWA promoters and there was some talk that a second tournament would be held in November to crown *another* champion.

Role models gone bad. Back in July, **Bob Backlund** stunned the world by turning his back on the fans. He claims he never lost the WWF World title to **The Iron Sheik** in 1983, because it was his manager, **Arnold Skaaland**, who threw in the towel, signalling his submission to Sheik's excruciatingly painful camel clutch. Therefore, Backlund argues, he has been champion for 16 years running.

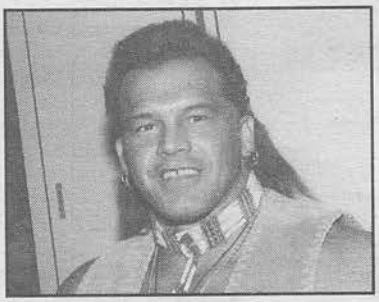


Bob Backlund

The wrestler fans used to call the "All-American Boy" once loved to sign autographs. Now he refuses to do it unless the autograph-seeker can name every U.S. President *and* Vice President in chronological order.

As if Backlund's switch to rulebreaking wasn't hard enough for loyal WWF fans to take, **Tatanka** also decided being a good role model wasn't for him. The same man who prided himself on setting a good example for his fellow Native Americans and boldly took on anyone who dared insult the tradition of his people blatantly sold out to **Ted DiBiase**.

After weeks of complaining to everyone that his good friend **Lex Luger** was the one who was secret dealing with the "Million-Dollar Man," Tatanka revealed at SummerSlam that he and DiBiase had been in cahoots for some time. While DiBiase distracted Luger, Tatanka rolled him up from behind and pinned him. Luger then argued with DiBiase, giving Tatanka the chance to jump him from behind and brutally beat him. Before leaving the ring with DiBiase, Tatanka stuffed a $100 bill in Luger's mouth.



Tatanka

What makes Tatanka's actions so difficult to believe is that in signing with DiBiase, Tatanka joins **Bam Bam Bigelow** and **Irwin R. Schyster** in the "Million-Dollar Man's" corporation. Over the last two years, Bigelow and Schyster both drew the ire of the Native American superstar.

Bigelow twice cut Tatanka's hair in an effort to humiliate him; Schyster shredded Tatanka's sacred headdress and stuffed some of the feathers into his mouth and the mouth of **Chief Jay Strongbow**, his mentor. For this issue at least, Tatanka tops our Most Hated list.

Tag team turmoil. Both the WCW World tag team champions and the WWF World tag team champions are in serious trouble, but for very different reasons. **Paul Orndorff** and **Paul Roma** won the WCW belts at Bash at the Beach, beating **Cactus Jack** and **Kevin Sullivan**, but have struggled since. They've lost numerous non-title matches to both **The Nasty Boys** and **Marcus Alexander Bagwell** and **The Patriot**.

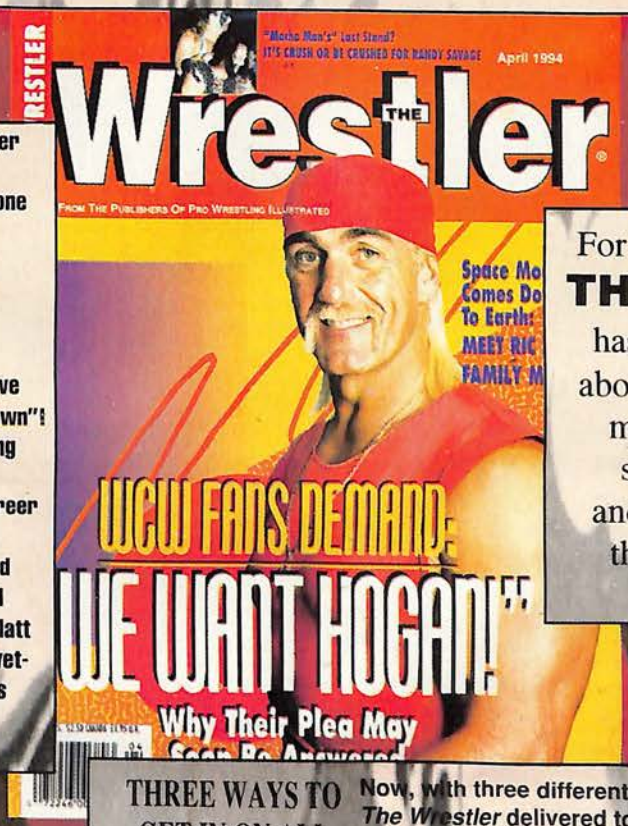
In the WWF, **Diesel** and **Shawn Michaels** proved they can be an awesome combination by winning the tag belts from **The Headshrinkers** only a few weeks after they began wrestling as a team. Their problem seems to be ego. Each man thinks he can carry the team. Diesel is also still angry at Michaels because his interference backfired and caused Diesel to lose the Intercontinental title to **Razor Ramon** at SummerSlam.

These two teams reign atop their respective federations, but you have to wonder for how long ...

That's all for now. What do you think of the NWA situation, the change in attitude of Tatanka, or anything else that might affect our ratings. If you have any comments, send them to: "Ratings Analysis," c/o THE WRESTLER, Box 956, Fort Washington, PA 19034. □

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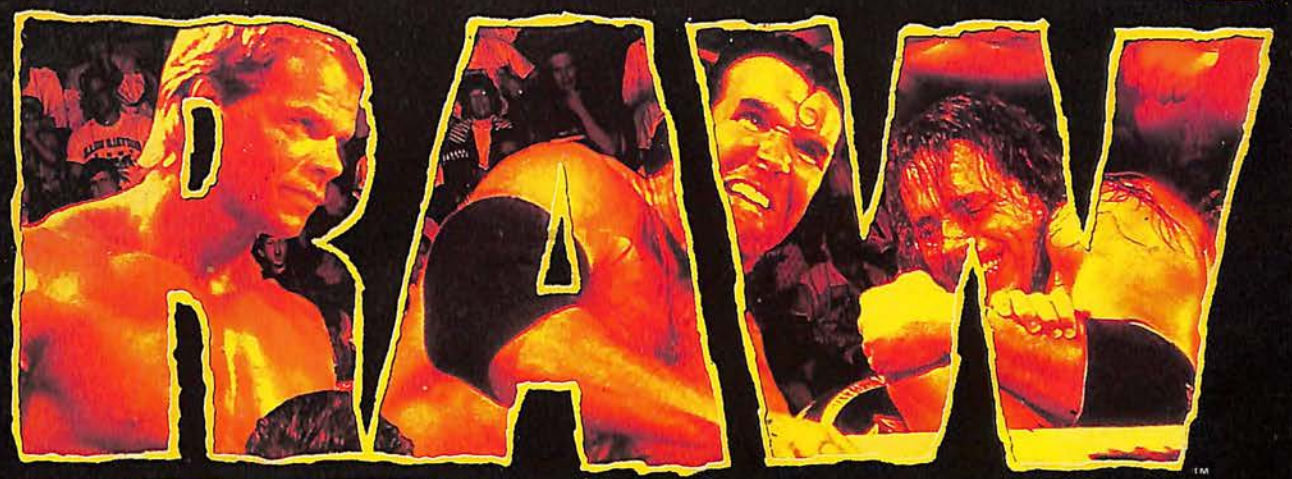
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